



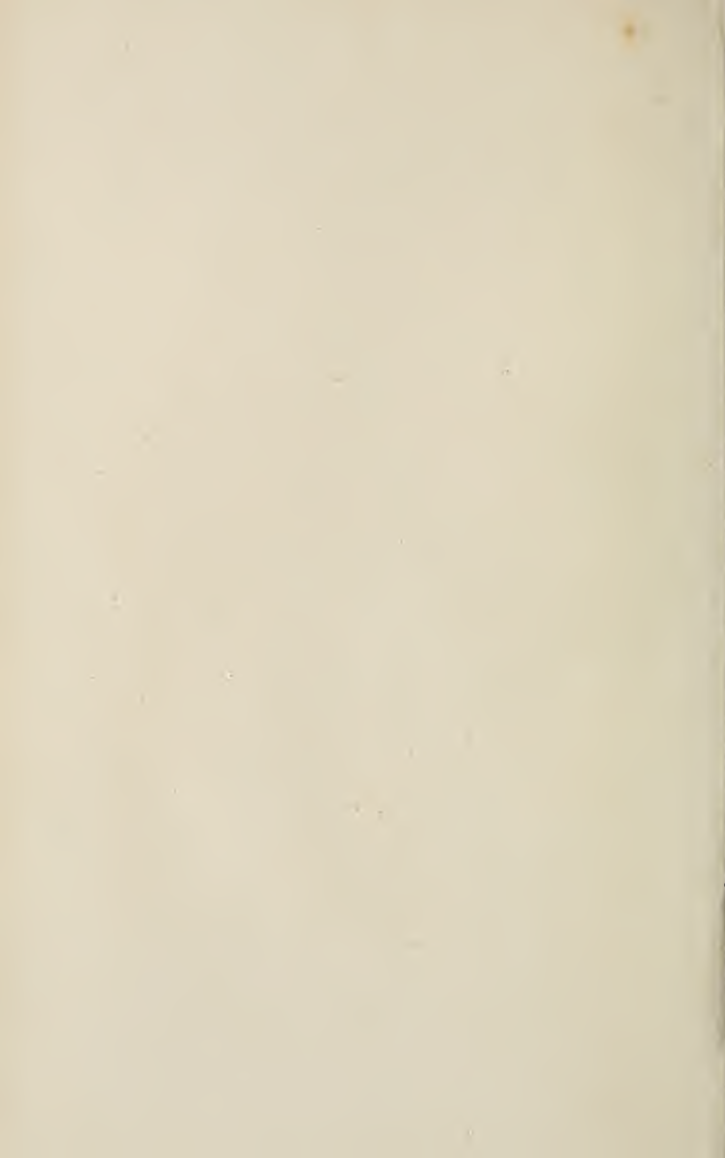
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







CHRISTIANA

AND

HER CHILDREN;

OR,

THE SECOND PART

OF

COTTAGE LECTURES ON PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

DESIGNED FOR COTTAGE AND FAMILY READING.

Rev Charles Overton

"We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: Come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee."

NUM. x. 29, 32.

1045.

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
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PREFACE.

WE never knew an instance in which a familiar and consistent parable failed to interest persons of every description. The parable of the Prodigal Son is a perfect specimen of this kind of teaching. The profoundest scholar is deeply affected by its inimitable pathos; while the most unlettered rustic, who would probably have slept over a learned sermon upon the nature of repentance, here finds his attention chained, listens with deepest interest to every part of the simple narrative, and has so thoroughly apprehended the important truths which are here prefigured, that he cries out at the end, with unfeigned emotion, "I am that prodigal! I will arise and go to my Father!"

Now, the kind of teaching that most resembles instruction by a parable, is to teach by an allegory. Allegory is the sister of parable, and the great allegorist, whose work is popular wherever the English tongue is spoken, and which is celebrated and relished in almost every modern language,* is John Bunyan. By the rare combination of original poetic genius of the

* For interesting particulars respecting its circulation, the reader is referred to a twopenny book published by the American Sunday-school Union, under the title of "The Pilgrim of Many Lands."

highest order, and the deepest experimental acquaintance with evangelical truth, he has thrown a bewitching charm over every part of the Christian's path, from his first awakening in the City of Destruction until he has crossed the river that divides the land of his pilgrimage from the city that he seeks, and the celestial gates have closed upon him in the regions of eternal day!

Few who have read the "Pilgrim's Progress" in early life, and then recurred to it again in after-times, have ever done so without the most exquisite emotion being awakened in the heart. It touches a chord of the keenest sensibility. It lights up the checkered experience of real life with the romantic imaginings of fancy, and imparts to the sombre hues of maturest age some of the glowing tints that were painted in our earliest youth. The effect is the same in kind, though not in degree, as that produced by the sacred volume itself. We seem again to have met with an early benefactor, and to be looking into the secret spring,

"Which gave our earliest, best emotions birth."

and we enter with all our hearts into the sentiments so feelingly expressed by Cowper:

"O thou, whom, borne on fancy's eager wing,
Back to the season of life's happy spring,
I pleased remember, and, while memory yet
Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget;
Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;
Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple style,
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile;
Witty, and well employed, and, like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables his slighted word:
I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should move a sneer at thy deserved fame;

Yet e'en in transitory life's late day,
That mingles all my brown with sober gray,
Revere the man whose Pilgrim marks the road,
And guides the progress of the soul to God."

The striking testimony borne by the late Dr. Arnold to the "Pilgrim's Progress" is very remarkable. His admiration of it was very great. "I cannot trust myself," he used to say, "to read the account of Christian going up to the celestial gate, after his passage through the river of death." And when, in one of the foreign tours of his latter years, he had read it through again, after a long interval, "I have always," he said, "been struck with its *piety*; I am now equally, or even more, by its *profound wisdom*. His 'Pilgrim's Progress' seems to be a *complete reflection of Scripture*, with none of the rubbish of the theologians mixed up with it."

Now, since the learned and unlearned all agree in admiring this wonderful book, and since its great design is to illustrate evangelical truth, and to present it in a captivating form, how extremely desirable is a familiar and popular course of Lectures upon this unrivalled allegory! Few books would be so well adapted for family reading on Sabbath evenings. If the interest of the allegory were maintained in a narrative style, its meaning simply explained, and then a pointed application briefly addressed to the conscience, such a Lecture, we conceive, upon any part of the "Pilgrim's Progress," would chain the attention of both young and old, for half an hour, and, by God's blessing, awaken a profitable train of thought in the breasts of all. A book like this might be used with profit in a school-room or private house, wherever two or three

were gathered together for edification and religious instruction. In neighbourhoods of the new and remote sections of our country, where public worship is rarely held, and where other means of religious instruction are few and far between, a group of parents and children might be readily assembled in a private house, and find, in this volume, all the needful help, so far as outward means are concerned, to secure a profitable and edifying interview. Who can tell how many might be awakened, by such a use of this unpretending volume, to flee from the "City of Destruction" and not look behind them till they reach the home of the blessed!

Sometimes a Sunday-school is opened for an hour or two on God's holy day in places where no opportunity for stated public worship is enjoyed. In such cases parents and neighbours might conveniently assemble after the exercises of the school, and draw from this volume such assistance as they may need in conducting all the exercises of religious worship. It will be observed that each Lecture is accompanied with a hymn at the beginning and close, and also with a form of prayer, chiefly in the language of Scripture, for those that may feel the need of such an aid to devotion.

We are aware that many valuable contributions have been made to the better understanding and spiritual improvement of "Pilgrim's Progress;" and though many simple-hearted readers may have said of some of them what is reported to have been said to the venerable Mr. SCOTT by a poor woman, to whom he had made a present of a copy of the work with notes by himself, that "she understood it *all but the notes*," others have pointed out new and striking features of the

work, and opened fresh sources of pleasure and profit in its perusal. There is still room, however, for such a volume as the present, and its adaptation to a *felt* want is fully evinced by the rapid and wide circulation of the original work.

The simple, unaffected, earnest and evangelical spirit that is diffused throughout the present volume, and the ingenuity with which the allegory is made to serve the purposes of the author in sustaining and giving effect to his admonitions and exhortations, are among its chief recommendations.

The Lectures were delivered, a year or two ago, in a school-room, by the Rev. CHARLES OVERTON, Vicar of Cottingham, Eng., to the people of that parish, and in adapting them to the purposes of the present publication, due pains have been taken to impair as slightly as possible the integrity of the original work.

The great favour with which the former volume from the same source has been received, encourages the hope that the present series, which embraces the story of Christiana and her children, will find general acceptance, and prove the means of extensive and lasting good.

We can heartily unite with the author of the Lectures in the prayer that the Eternal Spirit, who magnifies his own glorious power by the weakness of the instruments which he employs, may own and bless the following pages to the present and everlasting benefit of many souls. Lord of all power and might! Speak through these pages to the hearts and consciences of many who shall peruse them. Let some poor slumberer in the City of Destruction be thoroughly aroused by them, and effectually warned to flee from the wrath to come. Let some true pilgrims, whose faces are set

to the heavenly Zion, who are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before them, and whose souls are discouraged because of the way, receive here a word of comfort to deliver them from their grief, and to direct and encourage them in the way everlasting. And oh, let the writer, and some that have profited by his labours, be conducted safe through the swellings of Jordan, be found with their true certificate at the celestial gate, and be admitted through the gates of the city to the glorious company that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and let them sing, together with the general assembly and church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven:

ALLELUIA! SALVATION TO OUR GOD WHICH SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND TO THE LAMB, FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.

THE
PILGRIM'S INVITATION.

PILGRIM.

THIS world is but a world of wo,
And life a fleeting stage;
Then, Stranger, rise at once, and go
With us on pilgrimage!

We must not build beneath the skies,
Nor linger here below;
Awake, thou Stranger, and arise,
On pilgrimage to go!

STRANGER.

Why should I leave my native place—
Renounce this world so fair—
Begin the desert wild to trace,
And go I know not where?

Why should I weep, and strive, and pray,
And leave all joys below?
Thou, Pilgrim, hasten on thy way;
For me—I will not go!

PILGRIM.

I will not leave thee, will not cease
To urge thine instant flight;
Oh, turn not from the paths of peace,
Nor faithful warning slight!

Forsake the city of thy birth,
 Destruction is its name:
And all the towering pride of earth
 Must fall before the flame.

'Tis death to linger! Do not stay!
 Make haste, and quickly fly!
Let not thy tardy feet delay,—
 Oh, wherefore wilt thou die!

STRANGER.

But, Pilgrim, is thy record true?
 What moves thee thus with fear?
I would not linger if I knew
 The truth of what I hear!

PILGRIM.

The word is true: it is not mine;
 The King his oath has passed!
The word that warns us is Divine,
 And true, from first to last.

This flattering world we pilgrims leave,
 And turn to Zion's road,
Because most firmly we believe
 The faithful word of God.

We walk by faith, and in its light
 Things yet unseen we see;
It makes substantial to our sight
 Things that must shortly be.
Do thou the heavenly word embrace;
 Flee from the wrath to come;
To Zion's hill direct thy face,
 And seek in heaven thy home.

STRANGER.

But, Pilgrim, tell me, is it so?
 The heavenward way, I hear,
Is but a path of grief and wo,
 Of trial, toil and fear!

I've heard that pilgrims, when they slight
The joys of sense and sin,
Engage at once in dreadful fight,
And now their woes begin

They sink in deep desponding fear,
The onward way mistake;
And, while the thunder's voice they hear,
Exceedingly they quake!

They cannot find the Wicket-gate,
Or if they find it, stay,
And knock, and knock again, and wait
Till frightened thence away!

'Tis said, the works in which they trust
Must all be counted loss;
And their pride must hide in dust
To glory in the cross.

They part, I've heard, with all delight,
For conflicts great and sore;
Against them mighty giants fight,
And dreadful lions roar.

And more than that, to daunt their hearts,
Apollyon must prevail;
For lo, he hurls his fiery darts
As fast as rattling hail.

Then rumour speaks of regions dark,
Without one cheerful beam,
Where hideous spectres flit and bark,
And doleful creatures scream.

Ten thousand ills, in sad array,
The pilgrim's life attend;
No honour gilds his darksome way,
And madness is his end!

For, see him at his journey's close—
What doubts and fears arise!
What horrors chase away repose!
What darkness veils his eyes!

It is not thus with men of earth,
When they resign their breath;
They spend their days in wealth and mirth,
No bands are in their death!

Then gird thee, Pilgrim, for the war,
And toil and danger face;
I will not seek the land so far,
Nor such a life embrace!

PILGRIM.

Then fare thee well! for here we part,
And on my way I go;
But inly bleeds my aching heart,
To leave thee to thy wo.

'Tis true the pilgrim has his cross,
His toils, and foes, and fears;
He looks for trial and for loss,
While in this vale of tears.

But oh, if sorrows make him sad,
And sink his soul in grief,
He has his hopes to make him glad,
And sweetly bring relief!

While on his way he never fails
Gigantic foes to meet;
He toils up hills, descends in vales,
And snares surround his feet.

He walks through regions dark and drear,
Where nature stands aghast—
And sadly murmurs on his ear,
The stream of death at last.

But giants, mountains, conflicts sore,
And every foe to ease—
What are they all? he dreads far more
The wrath from which he flees.

It is not as thou say'st: the way
To Zion's mount is plain;

And though at yonder gate we stay,
We never knock in vain.

We do not range through regions wide
Uncertain of our road;
We have a never-failing Guide,
That Guide the Lord our God.

When from Destruction first we fled,
To face a world of wo,
"My presence," then Jehovah said,
Shall surely with thee go."

And faithful is that gracious word;
That promise still we plead,
And find the presence of our Lord
In every time of need.

He girds us for the arduous fight,
Supplies the armour true,
Arrays us with his glorious might,
And makes us conquerors too.

In sharpest wo, severest loss,
His presence we proclaim,
And learn, for every painful cross,
To bless his holy Name.

Nor think that storms and clouds of night
Succeed in sad array;
For oft the pilgrim's path is bright
With many a cheering ray.

When at yon cross, with burden vast,
He spreads his grief abroad,
And learns, by simple faith, to cast
His burden on the Lord,

What joys and sacred pleasures bloom
With life unknown before!
His sins within his Saviour's tomb
Have sunk to rise no more!

When pilgrims, with the Interpreter,
For wisdom humbly plead,

They find him ready to confer
The precious gifts they need.

When he draws near, and comes to seal
The pardon of their sins,
What inward joy and peace they feel,
While heaven itself begins!

And oft, when in the house of prayer
They stand on yonder hill,
They find their Saviour present there,
His promise to fulfil.

He meets them there, and comes to bless,
And make his fold rejoice;
While gathered wanderers all confess
The heavenly Shepherd's voice.

He leads them forth to pastures green
And mountains of delight,
From whence the heavenly hills are seen
Revealed to mortal sight.

Believe me, Stranger, if the way
By pilgrim footsteps trod
Be dark, it is because they stray,
And wander from their God.

Their Guide, the great celestial King,
Conducts where joys increase;
He leads to pleasure's purest spring,
And all his paths are peace.

While walking in his holy ways,
Those happy realms appear,
Where only joy and notes of praise
Fall sweet upon the ear.

There never fails the sun to shine,
The birds unceasing sing;
And blooming flowers, with sweets divine,
In rich luxuriance spring.

But lo, their journey ends—they hear
The waves of Jordan roll!

At first they start, and solemn fear
Pervades their thoughtful soul.

Though dark and chill the waters seem,
And loud the billows roar,
Yet pilgrims safely cross the stream,
And reach the peaceful shore.

And why? Their Saviour and their God
Has tasted once that wave;
In mortal garb that way he trod,
And still is there to save.

The Lord of life, the King has died,
And at his dying breath
Affrighted Jordan's waves divide,
And vanquished now is death!

He meets us in the gloomy vale,
Supports us when we die;
He speaks, when flesh and spirit fail,
"Fear not, for it is I!"

And when, beyond the swelling flood,
Our mortal toils are past,
How glorious is the land, and good,
On which we stand at last!

No sin nor sorrow, death nor pain,
Can there our peace destroy;
There everlasting pleasures reign,
And bliss without alloy!

What mortal language can define
The realms of endless day!
Where burnished gold and sapphires shine
With bright and purest ray.

Then shall we see the glorious King,
Behold him face to face;—
I must not stay; my soul would spring
To reach that happy place!

STRANGER.

Stay, Pilgrim, stay ; thy words awake
 Emotions strange and new ;
 This sinful world I will forsake,
 And be a pilgrim too.

My choice is fixed : I go with thee ;
 No more thy toils decline ;
 Thy people shall my people be,
 And thy God shall be mine.

PILGRIM.

I praise thy name, Celestial King.—
 Here, Stranger, take my hand !
 We two in Zion's ways will sing,
 And seek that better land.

Now each that shall our steps pursue,
 And from Destruction flee,
 A *stranger* and a *pilgrim* too
 Shall own himself to be.

PILGRIM and STRANGER, together.

Kind Reader, thou whose wandering eye,
 Now glances on this page,
 Lift up thine heart, oh, lift it high,
 And come on pilgrimage !

Whate'er thou art, in weal or wo,
 In youth or hoary age,
 Cast in thy lot with us, and go
 This day on pilgrimage.

COTTAGE LECTURES;
OR,
THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS
PRACTICALLY EXPLAINED.

The Second Part.

LECTURE I.

CHRISTIANA AWAKENED.

LORD, what a wretched land is this,
That yields us no supply,
No cheering fruits, no welcome shade,
Nor streams of heavenly joy !
Yet the dear path to thine abode
Lies through this weary land :
Lord ! we would keep the narrow road,
And run at thy command.
Our souls shall tread the desert through
With undiverted feet :
And faith and flaming zeal subdue
The terrors that we meet.
A thousand savage beasts of prey
Around the forest roam ;
But Judah's Lion guards the way,
And guides the strangers home.
Long nights and darkness dwell below,
With scarce a twinkling ray ;
But the bright world to which we go
Is everlasting day.
By glimmering hopes and gloomy fears,
We trace the sacred road ;
Through dismal deeps and dangerous snares,
We make our way to God.

1 CORINTHIANS vii. 16.

FOR WHAT KNOWEST THOU, O WIFE, WHETHER THOU SHALT SAVE THY HUSBAND ? OR HOW KNOWEST THOU, O MAN, WHETHER THOU SHALT SAVE THY WIFE ?

THE second part of the Pilgrim's Progress treats of the conversion of Christian's wife and children,

with their eventful journey to the Celestial City. The whole history is a happy fulfilment of the hope held out in the verse which I have just read. It is not often that the Lord takes only one of a family to bring to Zion. When first the gospel was proclaimed among benighted idolaters, it would often happen that the father or mother of a family would be brought out of darkness into marvellous light, while the other was left unconverted in a state of nature. On such an occasion it was by no means the duty of the one who was visited with saving grace to depart from the other who was not so visited. On the other hand, a pleasing hope is held out to the one converted first, of becoming the happy instrument of the other's conversion. Is the wife in the first instance the subject of the gracious change? "What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?" Or, does the husband feel first the transforming power of vital godliness? "How knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

We shall consider—

I. The general effect produced in the City of Destruction by the report of Christian's end.

II. The effect which it had upon Christiana.

III. How she was encouraged to set out with her children on pilgrimage.

I. We begin with the general effect produced in the City of Destruction by the report of Christian's finished journey. Though he was despised and reviled when he first set out, and all the inhabitants of his native place counted his life to be without honour, and his end to be madness, it was far other-

wise as soon as he had crossed the river. Then did the whole country actually ring of him and his proceedings. There were few houses where his eventful course was not discussed, and few individuals who had not the record of his pilgrimage. The Pilgrim's Progress got many well-wishers to the way which he took. All men commended the happiness of the country whither he was gone; and many who shrunk from the hazards of the journey, secretly longed for its happy termination. Much was said respecting the honour and dignity which the Pilgrim had attained, and the glorious comrades with whom he was now associated. The happiness and favour which he enjoyed in the King's palace was noised abroad. In addition to this, a rumour was circulated, and many believed it, that ere long the King himself would come into those parts to know the reason, if they could give him any, why his neighbours had set so little by him, and why they had him so much in derision when they perceived that he would be a pilgrim. It was love that he bore to the Prince his Sovereign that induced Christian to venture as he did. How then could the Prince view with indifference, or ever forget the indignities, that had been cast upon his faithful subject? His own honour was concerned in the entire vindication of all his true-hearted servants. Thus it went as an undoubted truth among many, that the great King would consider the injuries done to Christian as done to himself. All this excitement, and this wonderful change in the minds of men, looked well. A passing stranger, as he viewed what was going on in the City of Destruction, if he really desired the best interest of its inhabitants, would be much encouraged by what he beheld, and would say: "I am glad that

the rumour of these things is noised abroad in this country; who can tell but that it may work some good effect on some that are left behind?"

Here let us remark what strong encouragement there is to the upright to hold fast his integrity, by patient continuance in well-doing. If you act decidedly, and walk uprightly, in one way or another you are sure to be reproached. As Noah condemned the world by his diligence in preparing the ark, so every real Christian, by his constant preparation to meet his God and to flee from the wrath to come, condemns the carelessness, and ungodliness, and worldliness of many around him. They think it strange that he runs not with them into the same excesses as themselves, and speak evil of him. But oh, let the true Christian never mind this! "Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings." Those who are most loud in censuring your precision, cannot refrain from secretly admiring your consistency. For the present, indeed, you may hear nothing but reproaches and suspicions, so hard to bear. You may seem only to be submitting to mortification yourself, without being of the least service to others. But oh, recollect the seed cast into the waters after many days shall be found! You are as certainly dispersing abroad precious seed, by patiently suffering for the truth, and constantly ruling your life by it, as if you were more actually engaged as a *minister*, a *teacher*, or a *visitor*. This is seed that very frequently springs up when the hand that scattered it is not present to gather it. Herein is the saying verified, "One soweth and another reapeth." When your weary pilgrimage is ended; when you have kept the faith, and finished your course; when you have crossed the River and

been faithful unto death, an abundant harvest may spring up from your painful suffering for the truth. Numbers then may revoke the perverse judgment which they once passed upon you. When they think of the glorious shore upon which you have safely landed; when they think of the pleasures for evermore which are in the Paradise of God, how gladly would they exchange situations! They will feel how wise was your choice, and how foolish was theirs; and with God's blessing upon this awakening conviction, they too may resolve.

"To scorn the trifles of a day
For joys which cannot fade away."

If this resolution be carried out, they will reflect with the deepest sorrow and heaviness of heart upon any reproach or contempt which they have ever cast upon the godly. They will know this, that the Lord hath set apart such as are godly for himself; that his interests are bound up in theirs, and that whoso toucheth them, toucheth the apple of his eye. How can they fail to tremble with godly fear as they realize the solemn declaration: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

II. We proceed now to speak of the particular effect which Christian's death had upon his wife Christiana. Christian had a wife and several children. We recollect when he first set out on pilgrimage, how faithfully he warned them, how tenderly he

appealed to them, and how earnestly he desired to have them for his companions to the Celestial City. But all his admonitions at that time had been in vain. Like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears, they had hardened their hearts and refused to hearken. No sooner, however, was Christian across the river, where his wife could see him no more, than her thoughts began to work in her mind. Very heavy were the thoughts with which she was now visited. Now that he was gone, her conscience began to smite her for her unkind behaviour to the dead. She even reproached herself that her own sinful conduct was the reason why her husband had been taken away from her. This thought was almost too much for her to bear. She now saw herself in a light different from what she had ever done before. Her conscience was thoroughly roused, and she was pressed down with the load of her guilt. She recalled to mind her husband's spiritual distress; how she had hardened her heart against all his entreaties and loving persuasions; every thing that Christian had either said or done during the time of his burden returned upon her like a flash of lightning, and the vivid impression which it produced rent her heart in sunder. She began now to understand (which she had never done before) the meaning of the doleful cry which she had heard him utter: "What must I do to be saved!" Then did she address her sons and say, We are all undone. She accused herself of having sinned away their father, of hardening her own heart, and also of having hindered them from entering upon the way of life. Upon this the boys fell into tears, and cried to go after their father. Oh! said Christiana, that it had been but our lot to go with him; then it had fared well

with us, beyond what it is now likely to do. She told them plainly, that in her ignorance she had wickedly and foolishly attributed the distress of their father, at his first setting out, to a wrong cause. What she then *thought* had sprung only from a foolish fancy, she now firmly *believed* to have sprung from the light of life which had been given to him. Then did they all together weep again; and they cried out, Wo worth the day!

Said we not well, my brethren, that the good seed, sown in tears, often springs up and yields a plentiful harvest, after it has been hid for a long while, and appeared to be lost? It may be that some of you who have been taught to feel the power of the world to come are greatly tried in such a way as this. You have a husband or a wife, a son or a daughter, or some one to whom you are

“Linked in love’s indissoluble ties,”

who is opposed or indifferent to vital godliness. You are using, though you are afraid very imperfectly, the means which you think best adapted to do them good, without any visible effect. Or perhaps having done so for some time, the objects of your solicitude are now separated from you, and you have not the opportunities you once had to do them good. Still, however, you are not cheered with any decisive marks of the great change in those about whom you are interested. Tried you may be, on this account, but despair you must not. Delays are not denials. Use the means as long as you can, continue instant in prayer to the last, and then humbly leave the event with God. First and before every thing else, endeavour to show the power and the excellence of true religion in your daily walk. Diligently fulfil

the duties of your allotted station, always showing a meek submission, and a kind and charitable and lowly, yielding spirit, where conscience is not concerned, and who can tell but that those who obey not the word may be won by such conversation as this? Watch for opportunities for speaking a word in season. Modestly but firmly state your sentiments when you are called to do so. Use all your influence, all your authority, and the whole weight of your example, to bring those about whom you are interested to the means of grace, and under the sound of the life-giving gospel. While you do this, and even when circumstances will not allow you to do it any longer, be sure that you keep not silence day nor night, but still besiege the throne of grace, and give the Lord no rest, until you receive the soul-reviving answer, "O man, or O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Think not that this is too much to ask. What is exceedingly great for an unworthy sinner to request, is only a very small thing for the King of glory to bestow. Remember that you are making suit to a king—a king who is able to do for you exceeding abundantly above all that you can ask or think—a king who delighteth in mercy—who is rich to all who call upon him; and who takes pleasure in them that fear him, and put their trust in his mercy. Why, then, should you not come with large petitions? Why should you despair of the conversion of your friends as long as they are in the land of the living? To him that is joined to all the living there is hope. "What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? How knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" What knowest thou, O parent, whether thou shalt save thy child? How knowest thou, O

sister, whether thou shalt save thy brother? If not before then, when thy head is laid low, the Spirit of the living God may powerfully bring to their remembrance the things which they have seen and heard in you. Then they will understand what they cannot now understand, but what they account to be foolishness. Then they will feel the burden of sin, and know something of its true weight. Then they will learn the reality of their transgression, and perceive something of its real malignity. Then they will begin to sorrow with godly sorrow; and as they begin to be afflicted and to mourn and weep, the springs of everlasting consolation will be preparing for them, and the angels in heaven will rejoice over them!

III. We proceed to consider, how Christiana was encouraged to set out with her children on pilgrimage. Two things especially conspired to promote this happy result—an affecting dream, and a secret visit. When Christiana had begun to reflect very bitterly upon her past conduct, she had a dream. She beheld a broad parchment opened before her, and held up to her view. Upon this was recorded the sum of all her ways, and the crimes, as she thought, looked very black upon her. Her mind was so deeply affected by the sight of this dark catalogue, that she cried out aloud for mercy in her sleep: “*and the little children heard her.*” After this, two forms, exceedingly ill-favoured, appeared to be standing by her bed. She heard them say, “Something must be done with this woman. She cries out for mercy. If she be suffered to go on, we shall lose her as we have lost her husband. We must, by some way, seek to take her off from the thoughts of what shall be

hereafter, or else all the world cannot help but she will become a pilgrim." In addition to these alarming representations, the same night she had something shown her of a more animating and encouraging kind. She thought that she saw Christian in a royal palace. He seemed to be clothed in white, with a crown on his head, and a harp in his hand, and she thought that he was bowing his head, and doing homage to the glorious Prince who there sat on a throne, for bringing him safe to those blissful regions. The impression made by these dreams was deepened considerably by what occurred next morning. A stranger knocked at the door, and came into the house, whose name was Secret. Very precious were the communications which he made to her. He said that he had heard the report of her good desires, and of her sorrow for her past conduct. He told her he was sent with a message of mercy to her, from the merciful King whose servant he was. He invited her to come to his house and to partake freely of the plentiful blessings which he loves to bestow upon the poor and the contrite in heart. He reminded her of the glory which her husband had attained, and assured her that not only Christian, but all his happy companions, would be right glad when they heard the sound of her feet over her Father's threshold. He also presented to her a letter from the King. This informed her that he would have her to do as Christian had done before her, for that was the only way to his city and to his presence. She was deeply affected at this joyful news; and then and there would have been conveyed direct, to worship before the King. She was told, however, "the bitter is before the sweet:" that she must go to the narrow gate across the plain; that she must read

continually, through every part of her journey, the precious letter which had just been put into her hands, and that she would have to present it at the far gate. This was enough for Christiana. She required now no further instruction, she needed not further direction. Her resolution was formed, and she began immediately to act upon it, in the most decisive manner. She called her children, and acquainted them with the change of her views and the resolution she had made. "Come," she said, "my children, let us pack up and begone to the gate that leads us to that celestial country, that we may see your father, and be with him and his companions in heaven according to the laws of that land." Then did the children burst out into tears of joy, that the heart of their mother was so inclined. So the visitor bade them farewell; and they began to prepare to set out for their journey.

How deeply affecting and full of instruction is all this! Have you, my brethren, been effectually encouraged to set out for Zion? Has the blessed resolution been really formed within you, "I will arise, and go to my Father!" We are not to look for dreams and visions for our warning and admonition. The word of the Lord is *perfect*, and contains all the instructions we need, to guide our feet from the misery in which we are involved, to the glory which awaits the believer in the world to come. God can, in a variety of ways, (by a dream, or a vision, if he pleases,) bring home to a sinner's heart the saving truths of his word. Whatever means he is pleased to employ for this end, the all-important lessons which he effectually teaches such as truly set out for Zion are essentially the same. He teaches all his people to feel deeply their need of mercy, to hope for

his salvation, and thankfully to receive his gracious invitations. Say, my brethren, have you really been thus instructed? I do not ask if you have ever had a remarkable dream: but I ask if you have ever had the catalogue of your sins set before you in such a light that you have felt deeply your need of mercy, and cried earnestly to obtain mercy? Oh remember, it is the great artifice of your adversary, the devil, to keep you asleep in carnal security. When you begin to be alarmed, to think seriously of your latter end, and to pray, he trembles lest you should clean escape from his power. He will devise a thousand ways to take you off from the thoughts of what shall be hereafter. Be not ignorant of his devices. And if you have begun to open your eyes, take care that you do not close them again. Have you learned the second great lesson which is taught to all the upright, to desire supremely the salvation of Christ? When you think of the good things which God has prepared for them that love him, and the blessings of salvation as they are described in his holy word, have you set your affections supremely upon these blessings, and resolved to be satisfied with nothing short of them? Remember, it was when the poor wanderer began to think of his distant home and the plenty there, that he resolved to arise and go to his father. Thus a sinner's glance at the rest and peace, and joy and triumph of ransomed saints, is often the commencement of his entrance upon the way everlasting. Once again, have you learned the last great secret which invariably leads the awakened sinner to make haste and delay not to keep the commandments of God? Have you received the gracious invitations of the gospel as addressed *individually to yourself*? Every individual in the world, to whom

the gospel is proclaimed, has a general invitation. But what effect have these upon the generality? They act and live as if they had no invitation whatever. Neither their heart is affected, nor their life influenced, by what they hear or profess to believe. But oh, how different is the case when the general invitation is made particular, and brought home to the heart by the secret power of the Holy Spirit! Then, as it were, does the heavenly visitor (the stranger whose name is Secret) knock at our door and present us with an invitation from the King of heaven, directed to ourselves, with our own name written upon it. As we receive this, we linger no longer. Seek *you*, my brethren, for this, and then you will arise up and depart. Receive this, and then you will begin at once to prepare for your journey.

HYMN.

MORTAL, this is not thy rest;
Build not then below thy nest;
Linger not! depart, arise,
Seek thy home beyond the skies.

Lo, thy kindred, gone before,
Beckon from the blissful shore;
These the heavenly way could find;
Say, wilt thou be left behind?

He who led them all the way,
Owns them in the realms of day:
Look! his smile dispels their fears;
See! his hand has dried their tears.

Does thine heart within thee burn?
Homeward do thy wishes turn?
Wouldst thou, for eternal bliss,
Scorn an empty world like this?

Hark ! the gospel-tidings say,
Come, and welcome ; come away !
Jesus will thy sins forgive,
Jesus died, and sinners live !

Freely take his offered grace,
All his promises embrace ;
Then, with glory full in view,
Steadfastly thy course pursue !

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, we come before thee, in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour, to implore thy blessing upon what we have now heard. Pour down thy Holy Spirit upon us, and effectually seal to our hearts the instructions we have received. Thou hast graciously promised not only to bless thy people, but to make them a blessing. If thou hast indeed called any of us to the knowledge of thy name and faith in thee, be pleased to make us a blessing to our kindred according to the flesh. May we have grace so to pursue and to finish our course, that it may turn for a testimony unto others. And oh ! do thou make it an effectual testimony ; that if any obey not the word, they may without the word be won by our upright and heavenly conversation. May we never cease our prayers and efforts for the conversion of such as linger yet in the City of Destruction. Still may it be our heart's desire and prayer to God for them that they may be saved. Grant that they may awake out of sleep, and seek thy face that their souls may live. May we every one seriously call our past ways to remembrance, and be ashamed and confounded at our manifold sins and our evil doings. And if thou hast indeed put good desires into any of our hearts, enable us, we beseech thee, to bring the same to good effect. Show us that this is not our rest ; and make us heartily willing to arise and depart. May we not only have our sins set before us in such a light as to make us earnestly cry for mercy, but oh, visit us with thy salvation, that we may see the good of thy chosen, and glory with thine inheritance. Show us that we are individually called by the gospel message to forsake the foolish and live. And grant that through grace we may obey the calling. May we make haste and delay not to keep thy commandments, and be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. We ask all in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

LECTURE II.

A WHOLE FAMILY ON PILGRIMAGE.

COME, humble sinner, in whose breast
A thousand thoughts revolve ;
Come with your guilt and fear oppressed
And make this last resolve :

“I'll go to Jesus, though my sin
Hath like a mountain rose ;
I know his courts, I'll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.

“Prostrate I'll lie before his throne,
And there my guilt confess ;
I'll tell him I'm a wretch undone,
Without his sovereign grace.

“I'll to the gracious King approach,
Whose sceptre pardon gives ;
Perhaps he may command my touch,
And then the suppliant lives.

“Perhaps he will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer ;
But, if I perish, I will pray,
And perish only there.

“I can but perish, if I go :
I am resolved to try :
For, if I stay away, I know
I must for ever die.”

PSALM cxix. 60.

I MADE HASTE, AND DELAYED NOT TO KEEP THY COMMANDMENTS.

WHEN good desires are put into our hearts, we should seek immediately to bring the same to good

effect. No delays are so dangerous as those which elapse between the formation and the fulfilment of a gracious resolution. In the verse that goes before, David had described the blessed effects of serious consideration. "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto they testimonies." And then, as if on purpose to instruct us that prompt obedience will surely mark the implantation of a gracious principle, he tells us: "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."

Christiana acted in the same manner. Her resolution was considered in our last lecture; the manner in which she acted upon it will be our present subject.

We shall now confine our thoughts to three particulars—

- I. The temptation she resisted.
- II. The companion she gained.
- III. And the manner of their setting out.

I. See first the temptation which she resisted. Just as she was preparing to set out with her children, two neighbours knocked at the door. In the language of piety, to which she had hitherto been a stranger, she begged them to come in. The elder visitor, whose name was Timorous, (the daughter of him who fled from the lions,) was much surprised at what she heard and saw, and asked what it meant. With great simplicity Christiana disclosed the resolution she had formed, and the means by which she had been brought to it. Having recounted every thing that had taken place, she plucked out the letter of invitation which she had received from the King, read it aloud, and said, What now will you

say to this? But even this made no impression upon the individual she was addressing. She considered it nothing but madness which had possessed Christiana. She represented, in the most doleful manner, all the immeasurable hardships and trials and difficulties and desperate encounters which Christian had undergone, and begged of her, for her own sake and for her children's sake, to abandon her mad scheme, and to stay quietly at home, like other people. But most nobly did Christiana repel the temptation. With the happy ingenuity peculiar to those who are really in earnest, she was enabled to derive encouragement from the very argument which was used to discourage her. As to what you tell me, she said, of these troubles, they are so far from being a discouragement, that they only show I am in the right way. "The bitter must come before the sweet;" and that very bitterness will make the sweet still sweeter when it comes. Then did she firmly desire her tempter to go away, and not to disquiet her any farther. Upon this, she whose temptation was repelled began to revile, and invited her companion to depart with her from so foolish a person. But that companion, a young woman whose name was Mercy, was now otherwise minded. Her heart was secretly inclined to Christiana, and the affecting relation she had first heard had taken great hold on her. She resolved to have some further conversation with Christiana. Hence, she modestly declined returning at the present, and declared that she would walk a little with Christiana, and help her on her way. This made the elder visitor say: Well, I see you have a mind to go a fooling too! With that Timorous departed alone. But, arrived at home, she assembled the neighbours in whom she delighted.

These were a company chiefly notorious for their *blindness* as to spiritual things, their amazing *thoughtlessness*, the *lightness* of their minds, and their *ignorance* of divine truth. To them she recounted what she had just witnessed and heard. They were all most unanimous in condemning the madness and folly of such proceedings; and very soon turned from such a gloomy piece of business, to converse about those vain delights and carnal pleasures and amusements, upon which all their hearts were centered.

All this may afford much important instruction to every one of us. Have any of you, by the special grace of God, good desires put into your heart? and are you preparing in haste, without any delay, to act upon them? Look for temptations and discouragements to hold you back. Remember what the wicked spirit said in our last lecture, about this poor woman, as soon as ever she began to feel her sins and to cry for mercy. "If she be suffered to go on as she begins, we shall lose her as we have lost her husband. We must, by some means, take off her thoughts from what shall be hereafter, or else all the world cannot help but she will become a pilgrim." The visit of these women to Christiana, and especially the counsel given by Timorous, points out most accurately the stratagem of Satan to withdraw the convinced sinner from his purpose. It is in this manner the great adversary will endeavour to smother your convictions, and to turn you from the settled purpose of your heart. You have resolved firmly to cast in your lot among the true disciples of Christ; to forsake all your vain and foolish ways; to pray in your family, to hallow the Sabbath, to attend on divine ordinances, and in short to lead a

godly and a Christian life. But lo! some of your unconverted and worldly friends come to see you. Yes, and when they come to see you, they talk vanity. They are greatly surprised at your determination. They think you are losing your senses, when you first begin to act like a reasonable being. They try first what ridicule can do. If you will not be laughed out of your resolution, they will try the force of fear and discouragement. They will give you such a gloomy picture of the sorrows and hardships and trials of a religious life, as to make you out of love with it, if they can. If you are still immovable, they will probably load you with reproach and contempt; and then they will go and join with lovers of pleasure, and vain and thoughtless light-hearted people, who never look beyond the present hour and who think nothing of what must become of their never-dying souls. They will join with these in condemning you as a poor misguided person, not fit for the society of cheerful and sensible people! But be not afraid of their revilings. Declare plainly what is your resolution; state simply the reasons and motives that have induced you to form it, and then resolutely adhere to it, notwithstanding all the objections that are urged against it; and all shall be well. To strengthen you in your good resolution, recollect, that if you had no difficulties or hardships, you would not be in the way to heaven. The way to Zion is always narrow, and generally at the beginning both rough and thorny.

“The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.”

Where then would you be going, if your road were broad and smooth, and strewed with flowers? Oh! be reconciled to the bitter now, and the sweet shall

come hereafter. None can tell what effect a simple, though trembling, testimony borne for Christ, if it be coupled with consistent practice, may have upon others ! If it only vex and displease some, and send them offended away, what you have spoken in the simplicity of your heart may, by God's blessing, prove a sweet savour of life to others. Some whose heart the Lord has opened may give ear to your words, may have their souls knit in love and union to you and to Him whom you desire to serve, and may prove your companions all the way to the Celestial City.

II. This brings us to consider next the companion that Christiana gained in her pilgrimage. The whole family set out together ; and Mercy, the younger visitor, who lingered when Timorous had departed, was their companion. Christiana said she took it very kind in this young person thus to set out with her. Mercy replied, If I thought it would be to any purpose, I would never return to the town again. Then did Christiana affectionately press her invitation. She knew, she said, that the end of their pilgrimage would abundantly recompense them for all the travail of the way ; and, she continued, Go thou with us. Thou shalt not be rejected though thou go but upon my invitation. The King who hath sent for me and my children is one that delighteth in mercy. All things shall be in common betwixt us. Do not hesitate. Go thou with us. Still did Mercy object her want of special invitation ; but said, were she only assured of being received, she would cheerfully go, however tedious the way might be. But when Christiana proposed that they should proceed together to the Wicket-gate, and that her

future course should be governed by the reception she should there receive, Mercy was content, and resolved to do so. Great was the delight of Christiana at this determination. As they proceeded forward, plenteous tears were seen to fall down the cheeks of Mercy. Her heart was soft and very tender. Being asked the cause of her tears, she said it was by thinking of the state and condition of her relations that yet remained in the sinful town, without any instruction, or any to warn them of what is to come. Christiana endeavoured to comfort her by reminding her of the precious harvest that had sprung from the tears and prayers of Christian. He wept and mourned, she said, once, and no one regarded; but his Lord and ours gathered up his tears, and put them into his bottle, and now both I and thou and these dear children are reaping the benefit of them. Who can tell but these tears of thine may afterwards have a like result? Thus they proceeded forward until they came to the Slough of Despond, which had proved so great a trial to Christian at the beginning. Although the King had given commandment to his servants to make a good passage over it, for the benefit of his pilgrims, it was still in no better condition, but rather worse than it was before. Many labourers by bringing bad materials had marred instead of mended the way. Here, therefore, for a while the pilgrims were at a stand. But Mercy said, Come, we must venture; only let us be wary. Then they all looked well to their steps, and after some difficulties and many escapes the whole party got safely over. This difficulty past, again Mercy began to tremble respecting her welcome at the gate. Had I, she said, as good ground to hope for a loving reception at the Wicket-gate as you have, I think no

Slough of Despond could discourage me. But Christiana answered, You know your sore, and I know mine. Then she pointed out that fears and discouragements of one kind or another must be encountered by every pilgrim to the Celestial City.

See here, my friends, the blessed consequences of influence rightly used. Are any of you beginning in earnest to set your face to the city of the living God? Oh! do what you can to prevail upon others to set out with you. Be not content to go alone, until you have made a strenuous effort to gain over to the same mind those with whom you are associated; and if you see any about you well inclined, and half disposed to commence a godly and a Christian life, do not suffer the favourable opportunity to slip by unimproved. Do what you can to bring them to a point. Endeavour to fix their wavering minds. Encourage their good desires. Reply to their objections. Overcome their scruples. Invite them freely to partake of the same blessings which you are seeking for yourself. Say as Moses said to Hobab: "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you. Come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." And, like Moses on that same occasion, do not hastily be put off. Point out, as he did, the mutual advantage that will result to both from compliance with the invitation. Freely acknowledge that you yourself would be greatly benefited by the counsel and prayers and services of a companion; and, like a true pilgrim, be willing freely to share your blessing, and to have all things common with your fellow-traveller. Press your suit like the man of God, and say with him: "It shall be, if thou wilt go with us, yea it shall be, that

what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee." And you, dear young friends, who like Mercy are disposed to set out, but who hesitate and doubt and demur, because you imagine you have received no special invitation to come to Christ; and who cannot feel assured that he will graciously receive you if you go to him; let me reply to your objections. Whoever you are, inasmuch as you are a poor sinner, you are freely invited to come and partake of royal dainties. You are invited, freely invited, indeed you are. Do not make light of the invitation. If you know that you are a poor sinner, and are sure that nothing but the salvation of Christ can ever satisfy you or make you happy, and if you have a desire to forsake the foolish and live; you are invited, specially invited, indeed you are. You would not be more specially invited if you heard a voice speaking to you from heaven, or if you received a letter directly from heaven, with your own name written upon it. The special invitation is sometimes sent in the whirlwind and the storm, but is more frequently delivered by the still small voice that whispers to the heart. Some people are shaken with violence out of the sleep of sin, and never think of heaven until they wake up and perceive themselves upon the verge of hell. Their terror and distress are very fearful, and the manner of their conviction, and the means by which they are comforted, are alike singular and special. But do not suppose for a moment that the good work invariably begins thus in all true pilgrims. Many, like this young Mercy, are providentially brought into the way of pious people; their hearts, like Lydia's, are secretly opened. They cleave to those who are pressing forward to the narrow gate. Without any extraordi-

nary terror, they begin humbly to hope for the salvation of Christ. And though they have many doubts and fears, and but little to tell of remarkable experience, by a tenderness of heart and a readiness to renounce all the pleasures of sin, and all the vanities of the world for the sake of Christ and his gospel, they give evidence of a gracious state. Are there any here who answer to this description? Oh! be encouraged to go forward; and apply for a personal interest in Christ. You shall not be rejected, though you go but upon my invitation. The great King, whose ambassadors we are, and whose grace we proclaim, is one that delighteth in mercy. Indulge not the cruel suspicion that the merciful Receiver of returning sinners will in any wise cast you out. I will tell you what you shall do. Only make application to Christ just as you are—venture your everlasting all upon his bare word of promise—earnestly seek out of his fulness to have all your wants supplied; and if you do not meet with encouragement, I will be content that you shall return to your place. Oh! what malignant triumph would be diffused among all the wicked spirits that are in prison—

“If it ever could be said,
Here’s a soul that perished suing
For the boasted Saviour’s aid.”

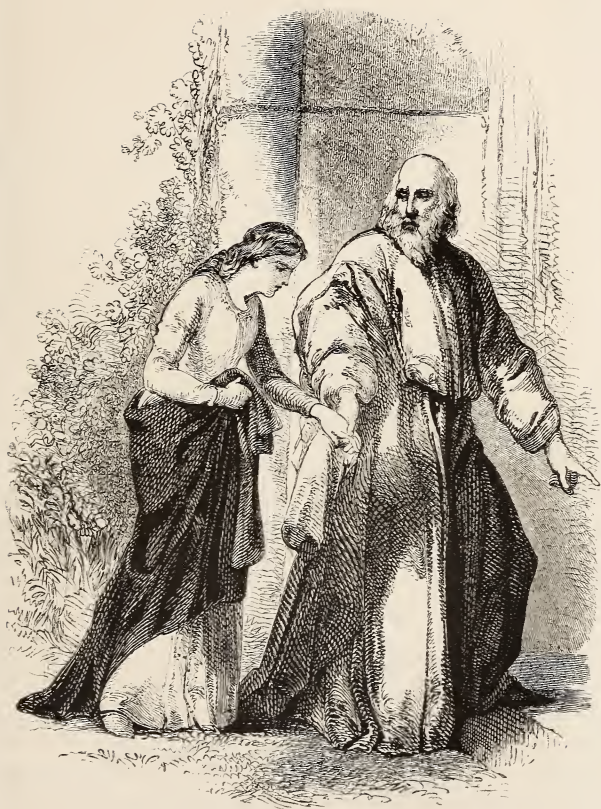
Cultivate a compassionate spirit for those that are living in carelessness and sin, and when you come to contend with those desponding fears which more or less will assail every individual who flees from the wrath to come, before he has effectually closed with the Saviour of sinners, ponder the path of your feet, and look well to your goings. Look to the exceeding great and precious promises held out to the returning sinner: so shall your steps be established,

and you shall pass safely this dangerous part of the road. Do not think that your case is singular, and that none can have such cause to tremble as yourself. You may know the plague and the sore of your own heart, that of another you cannot know. Difficulties and discouragements you are sure to meet with in your way to Zion; but oh! think, when once you are safely there, all your fears and discouragements will be swallowed up in everlasting joy.

III. We come now to speak a little, in the last place, of the reception which this interesting party met at the Wicket-gate. It was resolved when they came there, that as Christiana was the eldest, she should first knock, and that she should speak to him that opened the gate for the others. Long and loudly did she knock, without any one coming to open. Instead of this, they heard the loud barking of a frightful mastiff, that seemed greatly enraged, and quite prepared to fly upon them. This greatly terrified them all, and especially the children. For a while they were afraid to knock, lest the mastiff should break loose upon them; but, considering at length that there would be greater danger in going back, they continued to knock more vehemently than before. Then the Keeper came to inquire who was there, and what they would have. So the dog left off to bark, and the gate was opened. Christiana soon said both who she was and what she wanted. "What!" said the keeper of the gate, "is she now become a pilgrim, who but a while ago detested that life?" Then she bowed her head, and said, "Yea, and so are these my sweet babes also." Then he took her by the hand, and let her in, and said moreover, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." With

that he shut the door, and commanded a trumpeter to announce their entrance through the gate, with notes of gladness and sound of a trumpet.

All this while poor Mercy was standing without, and crying for fear she was rejected. But Christiana began to intercede for her, and said, "A companion of mine stands without, who has come hither upon the same errand as myself. She is much dejected in her mind, for she fears she comes uninvited." While Christiana was thus speaking, Mercy was heard without, knocking so loudly for admittance that she made Christiana to start. When she told the keeper of the gate it was her friend, he opened the gate and looked out; but the poor applicant had fainted and fallen down. He took her up, and encouraged her in the kindest manner. She objected that she had no invitation from the King, but only from her friend, who had asked her to come to that place; but still she earnestly craved admittance through the gate. Then did the kind keeper again take her by the hand, and say, "None are refused admittance through this gate who earnestly desire to enter into it, *by what means soever they are induced to come here.*" Then did her spirit revive, and right glad she was to be admitted to those who had entered before her. All needful instructions for their future journey would here be given them; and for a while they were left to converse together. They congratulated each other on their safe admittance. Christiana said she had well-nigh given up all for lost, when no one came to the gate, and the mastiff barked so fiercely. But poor Mercy thought her case was far more desperate, when her friends were admitted, and the door was shut, and she was left without. If she had not observed what was



written over the gate—"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you," she would not have dared to knock at all; and, indeed, she was so sick and faint that she scarce knew whether she knocked or not. Christiana, however, informed her that she had knocked indeed, and that to some purpose. She said, moreover, that instead of being angry or offended at her rudeness in knocking so loudly, the Lord of the place only sweetly smiled when he heard it, and evidently had seemed to be pleased with her importunity. They all wondered greatly why such a dog was kept at such a place; and this mystery was explained to them. They were informed the dog had another owner. Although he means not so, his barking often causes pilgrims to knock more earnestly. He absolutely frightens away only such as are not really in earnest; but all others that are true-hearted, however they may be made to tremble, receive timely aid, and are delivered from the power of the dog.

And now, dear brethren, let me briefly inquire, Have you really come to the gate? Have you applied, by effectual, fervent prayer, to Him who sits upon the throne of grace, who never did, and who has promised that he never will cast out a poor sinner who comes to Him? Whether your invitation be special or general, if you come to ask for pardon and instruction, your sincerity must be tried. Have you begun to perceive your guilt and danger, your ignorance and need? To pray earnestly for pardon and mercy, for light and grace, is to knock at the gate. Have you ever really given an earnest knock in your life? I do not mean, have you ever repeated a prayer; but with some true sense of your awful state, have you ever cried to Him who can save you

from death, Lord, save or I perish? With some true sense of your blindness and darkness as to spiritual things, and with a hearty desire for divine teaching, have you ever earnestly cried, Oh, send out thy light and thy truth, and lead me in the way everlasting? Are you now crying for these blessings? Have you been crying for them a long while without appearing to obtain an answer? And are you so hindered in your prayers, that you are sometimes well-nigh tempted to desist? Remember that he who answers prayer waits to be gracious. He will not be angry with you for your importunity; but he is angry, very angry with the fearful and unbelieving, who pretend to pray to him, and will not wait for what they want, but are driven away from the throne of grace, by the noise of an adversary that can do no harm to the upright. The proper use to make of difficulties and dangers, temptations and delays, is, to be more fervent in your cries for help. When this is the case, you will soon be convinced that you have not cried in vain. You will soon be admitted into the presence of the King. And if others are admitted, while you are left, and your soul is ready to faint within you, and you are even ready to give up all for lost, look again to what is written over the gate of mercy: "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you!" Will not that encourage you to persist in knocking, and to persevere in prayer, more earnestly than ever? And lest you should think it presumption in coming, as you imagine, without a proper invitation, the very act of your coming proves that you are invited. Yes, and that you will be welcomed too! Coming sinner, thou art coming to a gracious Saviour. Oh remember, and let the delightful truth be engraven upon

your heart : “ We refuse none admittance through this gate who earnestly desire to enter through it, by what means soever they are induced to come hither.” The King himself has said, “ Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” You are specially interested in the intercession which he makes before the throne, if you believe the word which by the gospel is preached to you ; for again, he has said : “ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.”

HYMN.

THE bitter comes before the sweet :

Then let this heart be torn,
And let me, at thy mercy-seat,
With bitter sorrow mourn.

The bitter comes before the sweet :

Then, earthly pleasures, go !
For heavenly joys, with willing feet,
I'll face a world of wo.

The bitter comes before the sweet :

Then will I watch and pray ;
Nor shall the pains and griefs I meet
My onward progress stay.

The bitter comes before the sweet :

Then still at mercy's gate
My fervent suit I will repeat,
Though sad and long I wait.

The bitter comes before the sweet :

But sweetness comes at last ;
When mercy gilds the dark retreat,
The bitterness is past.

The bitter comes before the sweet :

'Tis sweet to be forgiven ;
The bitter ends, but joy complete
Shall never end in heaven.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, thou hast promised to be the God of all the families of Israel. We humbly beseech thee, mercifully to behold this thy family, for which thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed and delivered into the hands of wicked men. Pour thy blessing upon our seed, and thy Spirit upon our offspring, that they may spring up as willows by the watercourses, and be really, and manifestly, a seed to serve thee. May all our families be nurseries for heaven, and blessed in Him, through whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed. Oh, give unto each of us thy heavenly grace, that we may behave ourselves wisely, and walk in our house with a perfect heart! Thou hast taught us in thy holy word, that in the world we must have tribulation; and that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But thou hast graciously promised that if we suffer with him, we shall be glorified together, and that all our present sufferings shall promote our eternal salvation. Oh, make us heartily willing to endure any sufferings, however bitter, in this vale of tears, if only we may experience the sweetness of thy mercy in that better land where all tears shall be wiped away for ever! May we resist every temptation that is offered to turn our feet from the narrow way of life. May we know how to answer every one, and to give a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear. Make us wise to win souls; and teach us how to prevail upon others to go with us to the celestial city. Lord, grant that whatever influence or authority we possess over others, may all be employed for thy glory and for their profit. Oh that every individual here present, from the youngest to the oldest, may determine to go speedily, and knock at the door of mercy! Blessed be thy holy name, thou art a God that hearest prayer. Hear us, therefore, who are now kneeling before thee, we most humbly beseech thee. Let thy tender mercies come unto us, even thy salvation, according to thy word. May we pray always and never faint. May no discouragements, or difficulties, or delays, ever induce us to cease from prayer. May we know that we have the petitions that we ask of thee; and that thou hast not said, that we should seek thy face in vain. Hear us, O Lord our God; and answer us, and bless us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LECTURE III.

THE PILGRIMS IN THE INTERPRETER'S HOUSE.

BESET with snares on every hand,
In life's uncertain path I stand ;
Saviour divine, diffuse thy light,
To guide my doubtful footsteps right.

Engage this roving, treacherous heart,
To fix on Mary's better part ;
To scorn the trifles of a day,
For joys that none can take away.

Then let the wildest storms arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies ;
No fatal shipwreck shall I fear,
But all my treasures with me bear,

If thou, my Jesus, still be nigh,
Cheerful I live, and joyful die :
Secure when mortal comforts flee,
To find immortal bliss in thee.

JOB XXXIV. 32.

THAT WHICH I SEE NOT, TEACH THOU ME.

How suitable a prayer is this for every true pilgrim, in every stage of his journey to the heavenly city ! The principal part of our subject at this time will be the lessons of heavenly wisdom which the pilgrims learned in the Interpreter's House. How many excellent things which they saw not before were there taught them !

We shall consider—

I. Their progress from the gate to the Interpreter's House ; and

II. Some of the lessons which were there taught them.

I. As they proceeded forward, one of the children plucked some of the fruit which hung over the wall from the grounds of the man to whom the mastiff belonged. He was rebuked for doing so, though none of them knew who was the owner of the trees. The painful effects of this sinful act will appear afterwards. The next occurrence was a very distressing one. Two ill-favoured persons attacked them, with the intention of doing them violence. These robbers would have prevailed against them had they not earnestly cried out for assistance. In due time the needful aid arrived. In answer to their cries a person was sent to their relief from the Gate. This reliever said that, seeing they were defenceless women and children, he wondered greatly they had not requested a conductor from the King. Had they made such a request, it would readily have been granted. Then said Christiana, "Since the King knew it would be for our profit, I wonder he sent not one along with us." A very wise reply was given. She was informed, It is not always necessary to grant things not asked for : lest by so doing they become of little esteem. But when the want of a thing is deeply felt, its value is duly known. "Had a conductor," he said, "been granted unasked, you would neither have bewailed your oversight in not asking, as you now do, neither would you have known his real value. The King will be inquired of by his people for the blessings which they want ; and it is a poor thing that is not worth asking for." Still, however, it was

not necessary for the party to go back again, to ask for a conductor. They had been made to feel and confess their error; and in all places whither they went, they might rely upon seasonable supplies of help being sent, if they earnestly sought it. Then did the reliever go back to his place, and the pilgrims went on their way. They conversed together until they came to the Interpreter's House. Christiana knocked at the door, as she had done at the Gate before. No sooner was her name announced, than all the inmates of that house were filled with joy. It was joyful news to hear that one who had so long hardened her heart and spoken evil of that way, had at length, in deed and in truth, set out with her whole family on pilgrimage. Not the slightest objection was made to the free admittance of the whole party. The Interpreter said, "Come in, thou daughter of Abraham: come in, children: come in, maiden; come." So he had them all into the house. Nothing could exceed the kindness of the welcome which they every one received.

There are many important lessons which we may all learn from what is here related. Let us all beware of forbidden fruit. We may do wrong, and feel for the present no bad effects from our transgression; but a time will come when our sin will find us out. Oh! be on your guard, and avoid all appearance of evil. Not only depart from evil yourself, but use all your influence and all your authority to discountenance and forbid it in others. Temptations and adversaries are still to be looked for on our way to Zion, from our first setting out to the end of our journey. Oh! remember, in all your straits and extremities, your defence and your succour must come down from above. And it must be brought

from above, and actually arrive for your relief, by earnest prayer. He who sits on the throne of grace has said, "Call upon me in the time of trouble." However you may be assaulted by dangers and temptations, cry mightily unto him who has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee : my strength is made perfect in weakness : " and without all doubt the reliever will appear for your succour, and

" You shall obtain delivering grace
In the distressing hour."

The best and the safest plan is, upon our first setting out, humbly to ask for the Divine presence to go with us, and to be our defender and conductor to the end. But remember, God often teaches us the value of blessings by suffering us to feel our entire helplessness without them. He will be inquired of by us, for all things that are needful both to our souls and our bodies. If we have restrained prayer in time past, we must consider that in all places, wherever we may be, the prayer of faith will ascend direct from a penitent heart to the God of heaven. Whatever we may have been in time past, however ignorant or perverse, if we come humbly in the name of Jesus to the great Teacher, to be enlightened and instructed, waiting at the posts of his house, and knocking by earnest prayer at his door, we need not fear a repulse. All that apply to Christ for pardon, become the pupils of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is good ; and he loves to teach sinners in the way. The most perverse, the least and the meanest are welcomed alike by this heavenly Instructor. " He giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." Something of the joy of heaven is felt upon earth, by the whole household of faith, when those who have been known as opposers of true religion in

times past, become monuments of saving grace, and are seen knocking as penitent sinners at the door of mercy, to obtain mercy, and waiting as true disciples for instruction at the gate of wisdom. Whether old or young, if your heart is drawn out in love to the only Saviour of sinners; if you seek before every thing else for heavenly wisdom to be imparted to you, you are sure to obtain your heart's desire. The King himself has said: "I love them that love me; and they that seek me early shall find me."

II. We pass on now to consider three of the excellent things which our pilgrims learned in the Interpreter's House—the Interpreter representing the Holy Spirit.

1. The first was to warn them against an earthly mind. After they had seen all the wonders which had been shown to Christian before, the Interpreter took them apart, and had them into a place where was a man that could look no way but downward. He held in his hand a rake. There also stood over his head one with a celestial crown; and he offered him that crown, if only he would throw down his rake. But the man did neither look up nor regard. He cared nothing for the crown; he was too intent upon his employment. He continued still to rake to himself the straws, the small sticks, and the dust of the ground. Our pilgrims perceived at once the meaning of this humiliating figure. They saw in it, at a glance, the true emblem of the carnal mind and the men of the world. The Interpreter showed them, in a strong light never to be forgotten, the amazing vanity and folly of preferring the things of time and sense to the glorious prize held out to the believer.

Look, he said, how the poor man with his rake prefers to busy himself in raking up straws and sticks and dust, rather than to pay any attention to him who holds out the glittering crown ! So it is with the men of this world. The glories of heaven are but a fable in their eyes ; and the vanities of the world are the only things which they account substantial. The man with his rake could look no way but downward. So, earthly things, when they are supremely regarded, not only indispose men, but disable them from paying any attention to high and heavenly things. They quite carry their hearts away from God. The pilgrims were deeply affected with this sight. When Christiana cried out earnestly to be delivered from such a mind, the Interpreter said : The prayer, "Give me not riches," has lain by till it is almost rusty. It is scarce the prayer of one in ten thousand ; straws and sticks and dust, with most, are the great things now looked after. With that the pilgrims both wept and said, It is alas, too true !

Have we, dear friends, ever been effectually taught this all-important lesson ? None but the great Teacher, the eternal and glorious Spirit who can remould and fashion our sinful hearts anew ; none but he can effectually open our eyes and draw our hearts from earth to heaven. It is deeply affecting to see what numbers around us are busily engaged with the *rake*, and pay not the slightest regard to the glorious prospects which the ministers of the everlasting gospel would set before them. Their eyes the god of this world has blinded. Their back, as it were, is bowed down always. They are walking according to the course of this world. The riches and honours

and pleasures of life; the business, or cares, or amusements of the world;—these are the straws and the dust after which they pant, and upon which their minds are supremely fixed. They will not be diverted from this employment. Warn them of their danger; tell them that to be carnally-minded is death, and that, if they are summoned away into eternity in their present state, they cannot see the kingdom of God; and that they must be banished as enemies from his glorious presence—they pay no attention, but still continue raking the straws. Appeal to their hopes, and for the most part the result is the same. Proclaim the glad tidings of free forgiveness of all their sins, and gracious acceptance with God through the atoning blood and justifying righteousness of the Divine Surety; hold out to them the crown of eternal glory, bought with blood, and yet offered freely to sinners of every description, without money and without price; and they will not so much as look up. They make light of the gracious invitation. Their carnal pursuits are far more important in their sight; and still they continue bound to the earth and grovelling in the dust. Oh remember, that, in every instance, the enlightening and the life-giving power of the Holy Ghost is absolutely necessary to open our blind eyes and to change our earthly hearts, or else we shall remain tied and bound to the world, and taken up with carnal things all our days. Constantly let the prayer ascend from our heart: “Open thou mine eyes,” and “What I see not, teach thou me.” Recollect, too, that you want quickening power to be exerted upon your heart, as well as marvellous light to be imparted to your eyes. The Spirit of God alone can let you see the amazing

difference between earthly and heavenly things ; the Spirit of God alone

“ Can draw your best affections hence,
Above this world of sight and sense.”

And his gracious influence will be required, not only at your first setting out, but to the very end of your course. To the very last you must cry, “Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.” To the very last you will have to confess and to pray : “My soul cleaveth unto the dust : quicken thou me.”

2. We proceed to the next lesson which was taught to the pilgrims in the Interpreter’s house.—This was to convey to their minds a correct idea of saving faith. They were shown into a noble room, where there was nothing at all to be seen but an unsightly spider clinging to the wall. As soon as this was discovered, the inquiry was made :—Is there but one spider in all this spacious room ? Then said Christiana, while the water stood in her eyes, (for she began now to apprehend something of what was intended,) Yes, there is more here than one ; and such as have venom far more destructive than that which is in the spider. This was the point to which the Interpreter would bring them, and they all acknowledged the truth of what had been confessed by Christiana. Upon this their wise Instructor said : “The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings’ palaces.” Learn from this, he continued, that how full soever you may be of the venom of sin, yet you may, by the hand of faith, lay hold of a royal habitation, and dwell in the best of the King’s palaces above. Christiana confessed that she had only half apprehended the lesson at the first. The unsightly spider had appeared to her

a true emblem of a poor sinner, who is still defiled with sin in whatever position he may stand. But it had never occurred to her that the acting of faith was represented by the taking hold with the hands; nor that the king's palace had reference to the palace of the great King. The effect of this lesson upon the pilgrims was to fill them with gladness and deep humility. They looked one upon another, and also bowed before the Interpreter.

Have we, my friends, thoroughly apprehended this all-important lesson? Saving faith is taking hold of the precious promises, and this introduces the sinner to all his privileges and all his dignity. Have you been made to perceive any thing of your guilt and pollution in the sight of Him with whom you have to do? And is it your trembling inquiry: How can such a sinner as I am, and such a God as this is, come together, and meet in peace? Only as a true penitent, by simple faith, lay hold of the precious promises of the gospel, and you shall come into the King's presence and be brought with gladness into his glorious palace. Be sure that you do not look for any qualification in yourself, as your warrant for coming to Christ. A sense of sin, and the free invitations of the gospel, are all that you need. However defiled or sinful you may be, simple faith in the gospel-promises will give you an interest in all that Christ has done and suffered for sinners. The true penitent, looking to his Saviour, can say:—

“Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt pardon, welcome, bless, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe!”

Oh, mark the expression: because thy promise I believe. Faith in the promise ensures your pardon,

ensures your welcome, ensures your reception : and though, when you come to Christ, the power of sin shall be dethroned, and shall no longer have dominion over you, still, to the very last, you stand by faith. You must look to what Christ has done for you, and not to what his Spirit has wrought in you, as the ground of your confidence. The Spirit's work within us we mar and defile ; and nothing of our own can bear the severity of God's righteous judgment. Our persons are only accepted in the Beloved ; and it is only through him that our prayers and services are graciously accepted.

Oh, how wonderful is the way in which the Lord is pleased to deal with returning sinners who come to him by Jesus Christ ! “ He raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dung-hill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.”

3. The various ways in which the Lord speaks to his people is the last lesson of the Interpreter which we shall consider at this time. He bade them to consider attentively a hen with her brood of chickens, which he pointed out to them. They were to notice the various ways by which the hen made herself understood by her tender brood.

The King of the celestial city, in his infinite condescension, permits himself to be represented by this figure. What did he say once, when he came from his glorious throne, in great humility, to visit these outer provinces of his vast dominions ? “ How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings !” Every gracious invitation which by the gospel is addressed to sinners, is the voice of the Son of man—the call by

which all men are required to repent of their sins, and to believe the gospel. But "they love darkness rather than light." They will not come to the Son of God that they may have life. He calls, but they refuse. He stretches out his hand, but no man regards. He would, but they would not. When this call comes with demonstration of the Spirit and with power, they are sweetly constrained to fly to his sheltering wing for safety and protection. He draws, and they run after him. And when they have so fled to him, he rejoices over them as his people and his children, speaking to them only with the brooding voice of tenderest love; or else, to warn them of approaching danger, and to preserve them from sin, and from the assaults of the hovering foe, sounding an alarm in their ears, and faithfully apprizing them of what is before them.

Dear brethren, the simile which is here employed is a very simple one; but how amazingly important is the truth conveyed by it! Your lot has been cast in the valley of vision. From the earliest dawn of reason to the present hour, you have had line upon line and precept upon precept! Your whole life has been an acceptable time and a day of salvation. To you, as it were, all the day long, the only Saviour of sinners has been calling, and saying: "Seek ye my face." By his providence and by ministers, by his holy word and by the voice of conscience, Christ has been calling upon you to repent of your sins, to believe and be saved! Oh, it is a very solemn thought to ponder, that numbers are called in such ways as these who never partake of saving grace. "Many are called, but few are chosen." "To as many as received him, to them

gave he power to become the sons of God." A small whisper uttered in the house is more distinctly heard than a loud noise that is made in the street. Thus, the still small voice of the Spirit, addressed to the heart, spoken within, is far more powerful in operation than all the loud calls that never penetrate further than the ear. Oh, be not satisfied, and never think that you are Christians indeed, until you have experienced the effectual power of the Holy Spirit upon your heart. It is the Spirit's work upon the heart which makes all the difference between the real and the nominal Christian. Desire, and long, and seek, and pray for his gracious influence. Then you will hear the voice of the only Saviour calling you, as it were, by name, and you will fly as a trembling penitent for shelter and salvation to his protecting wing; and you shall not be disappointed. You shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust." As true believers, adopted into his happy family, and made his peculiar treasure, he will rejoice over you, and speak to you with the brooding voice of love all the days of your life. And when his judgments are abroad in the earth, he will give you timely notice, and invite you to seek, in closer communion with himself, that security and peace which are no where else to be found. "Come, my people," he will say, "enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."

HYMN.

O THOU, the great Interpreter,
No teaching is like thine;
Come, and thy heavenly gifts confer,
And cause thy light to shine.

'Tis thine to burst the chains of earth,
And saving faith impart;
No call but thine, of sovereign worth,
Can truly reach the heart.

Oh come, and draw this earthly mind
From dust to which it clings;
And let me rise, all unconfined,
To high and heavenly things.

Let me, so sinful and so vile,
Embrace thy promise, Lord;
And on a wretched sinner smile,
Who hangs upon thy word.

Give, with thine own almighty voice,
The true, the saving call;
Then shall thy pleasure be my choice,
And Christ my all in all.

PRAYER.

LORD, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Thou hast said in thy holy word, He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. O be thou our refuge in every time of trouble, for vain is the help of man. We humbly beseech thee, for thy dear Son's sake, look down in great mercy upon us, and send thy Holy Spirit into our hearts. Are not all thy children taught of thee? O gracious Father, that which we see not, teach thou us. Keep us, we beseech thee, from all things that may hurt us; and in all our dangers and necessities may we give ourselves unto prayer, and do thou stretch forth thy right hand to save and defend us. May we never cease our earnest supplications for the special and gracious teaching of thy good Spirit. Give us the joy of thy salvation, and uphold us with thy free Spirit. Deliver us, we pray thee, from the grovelling pursuits to which we are inclined by nature. Our souls cleave

unto the dust; quicken us according to thy word. Turn away our eyes from beholding vanity. Incline our hearts unto thy testimonies, and not unto covetousness. May we not seek our happiness in those things which perish in the using; but raise our hearts and minds to high and heavenly things. Enable us by true faith to lay hold of the exceeding great and precious promises which by the gospel are presented to us. May we come to the Saviour of sinners, with all our vileness and depravity. May we remember that he came to seek and to save that which was lost; and that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. Lord, increase our faith; and O grant that we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life which thou hast given us in thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. O may thy gospel come to us not in word only, but in power, and in much assurance, and in the Holy Ghost. Make us willing in the day of thy power. Draw us, and we will run after thee. And O grant to every one of us the strong consolation of those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the gospel hope. Hear us, O Lord, and answer our humble petition, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LECTURE IV.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Not all the outward forms on earth,
Nor rites that God has given,
Nor will of man, nor blood, nor birth,
Can raise a soul to heaven.

The sovereign will of God alone
Creates us heirs of grace ;
Born in the image of his Son,
A new, peculiar race.

The Spirit, like some heavenly wind,
Blows on the sons of flesh,
New-models all the carnal mind,
And forms the man afresh.

Our quickened souls awake, and rise
From the long sleep of death,
On heavenly things we fix our eyes,
And praise employs our breath.

EPHESIANS iv. 30.

AND GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD, WHEREBY YE ARE SEALED UNTO
THE DAY OF REDEMPTION.

INSTRUCTION is not the only benefit which believers receive from the Holy Spirit. It is true, he teaches the hearts of all faithful people : none teacheth like him, and all the children of God are taught of him. But in addition to the lessons of heavenly wisdom which he teaches, it is his office to sanctify

and renew the soul, to bear witness to his own work upon the believer's heart, and to set his gracious seal upon them, unto the day of redemption. How careful we should be, not to slight or offend Him from whom we receive such unspeakable benefits. O believer, whoever else you slight or offend, take care that you "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Staying at the Interpreter's house is, to be under the special teaching of the Holy Spirit. Some of the excellent things which were there shown to the pilgrims were considered in our last lecture; we now proceed to consider the further benefits which he conferred upon them.

We shall show—

- I. How he further instructed them.
- II. How he witnessed to their state.
- III. And how he washed and sealed them.

May his gracious light and power be experienced in our hearts, as we turn our attention to these important particulars.

I. How did the Interpreter further instruct the wayfaring people that were tarrying at his house? He bade them to notice, first, the meek and quiet way in which the sheep take their death. He led them into his garden, and desired them attentively to consider the great variety of flowers which were there. Some were tall, and others were low; their tints and odours were very different; and some were far more valued than others; and yet they all stood quietly, and looked well in the place which the gardener had assigned to them. In the field, he showed

them what looked like a flourishing crop of wheat, but when they came nearer, all the ears had been cropped off, and only the straw remained. Next, their attention was directed to a robin, which was flying away with a great spider in its mouth. They took special notice of the sad disparity which was here displayed. This little bird, which looks so innocent, and sings so sweetly, and feeds so readily upon crumbs, can change its diet whenever it pleases, and swallow down with greediness the most poisonous food. After many other lessons of practical wisdom had been taught them in proverbs, the Interpreter finally showed them a tree. Its leaves were fair and flowering; but its heart was decayed, and all the inside of it was gone and rotten.

Let all this teach us a lesson of patience and contentment, make us afraid of being satisfied with a fair show in the flesh, and warn us against an inconsistent profession. Does the sheep go quietly to the slaughter, and submit to her death without any noise or complaint? Remember that the true followers of Christ are to imitate the patience and gentleness of him that was crucified. If we are his people, we are the sheep of his pasture. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so he opened not his mouth." When he offered himself a sacrifice for our sins, he left us an example that we should follow his steps. A gentle, patient, yielding, submissive spirit, is eminently the spirit of Christ. We must go to the Interpreter's house to be thoroughly imbued with such a spirit. I mean, we must experience the transforming power of the Holy Ghost in our hearts. He only can subdue our natural impatience, and teach us to manifest something of the meekness and gen-

tleness of Christ. Do we require a lesson of contentment to be taught us? Consider the lilies and all the flowers, how quietly they grow and how lovely they look, every one exactly in the place selected for it by the gardener. The church of Christ is his garden. All true believers are his pleasant plants, and occupy the place which he has allotted for them. They are of different stature, and of different standing; and one greatly varies from another in form and use, in perfection and excellence. But they are all his. He takes pleasure in them all; and they, every one, more or less, reflect his image and promote his glory, as long as they remain in their proper place, and adorn their station by faithfully performing the duties that belong to it. Oh, let us not be desirous of vain-glory, envying one another, provoking one another. Let us seek earnestly for the spirit of godly contentment, that we may be more anxious to adorn our present position than to exchange it for another. Having gifts differing according to the grace which is given us, let it be all our care to improve and occupy them to the glory of the great Giver. Are we disposed to glory in the flesh, and to rest in outward appearance? Think of the stalks of wheat with the ears all cropped off; and the tree with its flourishing leaves, while it was decayed at the heart. The field is cultivated for the sake of the grain, and not for the straw, which is only fit to be trodden down on the dunghill. The tree is suffered to stand in the orchard, for the sake of the fruit which it yields, and not for the leaves which it puts forth. "Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." Oh! let us all beware of barren profession and fair appearance, without bringing forth fruit. Let us

pray earnestly, that through the power of the Holy Ghost we may be fruitful in every good word and work; and that we may avoid the fatal error of looking fair and flourishing to the outward observer, while all is false and hollow within. Constantly let us urge the fervent petition: "Oh, let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed." Or, if we are satisfied with going in and out among the Lord's people, and obtaining a good report of them, while we have no curb upon our carnal lusts and appetites, and can go from the place of the Holy to indulge in secret sin, and to commit iniquity with greediness, oh, let us remember, *he that judgeth us, is the Lord*. He is acquainted with all our thoughts and works and ways. He will bring every secret thing into judgment. Unless our nature be really changed, and we become thoroughly averse to every sin, we cannot stand before this holy Lord God. That same Spirit, my brethren, by whose power the gracious change is produced, alone can thoroughly convince us of its absolute necessity. Do not mistake coming to ordinances, or living on friendly terms with the people of God, for the vital change. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."

II. We pass on now to consider the *witness borne by the Interpreter to the gracious state of the pilgrims* who were tarrying at his house. While they were receiving instruction from his mouth, and feeding with great delight upon the provisions of his table, the Interpreter at length began to question them as to their past experience. He commenced with the eldest of the party, and inquired of her what moved her first to betake herself to a pilgrim's life. The

experience of Christiana had been too striking and deep to cause her any difficulty in replying to this inquiry. She simply recounted her past history. She told how her thoughts began to trouble her when Christian was dead: what bitter reflections were awakened in her heart, as she called to mind how she had treated him under his spiritual distress. She then related how she had been encouraged, when on the border of despair, by thinking of the glory of her husband; how warm desires to follow his steps were first awakened within her breast; and how she had been induced to act upon these, by the gracious and express invitation which she had received from the King of the Celestial City. Then did he inquire of her, if she had met with no opposition before she set out of doors. When did the Enemy ever suffer a pilgrim to leave the City of Destruction, without making an effort to obstruct the first step? Christiana's had not been without opposition. She related the visit and counsel of her ungodly neighbour; the vision she had had of the two that plotted together to drive her from her purpose; and lastly, she told how they had been attacked between the gate and the Interpreter's house. All this bore so evidently the marks of simplicity and godly sincerity that the Interpreter hesitated not a moment to bear witness to its integrity. "Thy beginning," he said, "is good, thy latter end shall greatly increase." Then did he turn to the companion of her pilgrimage, and say: "And what moved thee to come hither?" This was a trying moment to poor Mercy. Her want of marked experience had all along been a source of discouragement to her. She trembled, and for a while continued silent; but when she was exhorted only to believe, and to speak her mind

freely, she told at once what was the cause of her silence and her fear. She had no visions and dreams to tell of, as her companion who had just spoken; neither had she ever shed bitter tears for scorning the counsel of pious relations. What then was it, said the Interpreter, very kindly, that prevailed with you to do as you have done? Upon this, with wonderful simplicity, Mercy detailed the things that had befallen her. She told the effect produced upon her by the sight of Christiana packing up for her departure; and the emotion with which she had listened to her words on that occasion. "While she was telling these things," said Mercy, "the fire kindled: and I said in my heart, If this be true, I will leave my father and my mother, and the land of my nativity, and I will, if I may, go along with Christiana. So I asked her further of the truth of these things, and if she would let me go with her; for I saw now that there was no dwelling any longer in our town but with the danger of ruin. But yet I came away with a heavy heart; not that I was unwilling to come away, but for leaving so many of my relations behind. Still, I am come with all my heart, and will, if I may, go with my friend to her journey's end, and to the presence of the King." How did the Interpreter receive this simple narration? Did he consider it unsatisfactory, and refuse to bear witness to its genuine and gracious character? Far otherwise. In the most decisive and express manner he testified that her fears were groundless, and her welcome was certain. "Thy setting out," he said, "is good, for thou hast given credit to the truth. Thou art a Ruth, who did, for the love which she bare to Naomi, and to the Lord her God, leave father and mother and the land of her nativity, and come out, and go with

a people that she knew not before. 'The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.'" Oh, the comfort imparted by these words to the individual to whom they were addressed! She could not sleep for joy, for now her doubts of missing at last were removed further from her than ever.

Do we, dear brethren, know any thing of what it is for the Spirit to bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God? Some of you, it may be, have had striking and marked experience. By some providential dispensation, which you can never forget, you were aroused out of your careless inattention to spiritual things. Your conviction of sin was very deep. You went heavily, and bowed down all the day long. Your past life, with all its unnumbered provocations was so vividly set before you, that you were unable to look up. You were driven almost to the verge of despair. You thought, verily, that under the whole heaven there breathed not a sinner so deeply depraved and so wretchedly defiled as yourself. You remember well, both clearly and distinctly, by what means the desire of pardon and the hope of salvation were first infused into your trembling heart. You remember how you received and welcomed the free and gracious invitations of the gospel, to the weary and the heavy laden. You were addressed, not indeed by name, but by character. A letter brought to you by the post was not more directly intended for you than this invitation, when applied to your heart by the power of the Holy Ghost. Now it was enough; you rose up to depart, and the salvation of Christ and the favour of God has been the ruling object which you have had in

view ever since. Your course has not been without its difficulties. Worldly friends perhaps would have kept you back and ungodly neighbours have pointed against you the finger of scorn. The great adversary, in a variety of ways, has stood at your right hand to resist you; and many there be who would have robbed you of your peace, and destroyed your soul. But having obtained help from God, you have escaped these dangers; and you continue to this day, hoping and waiting, striving against sin, and pressing forward on the narrow way. Is this indeed an outline of the experience of any here? To every such individual we say, by the word of the Lord, Thy beginning is good, and thy latter end shall greatly increase. Only hold fast the beginning of your confidence steadfast unto the end. Pursue, without turning aside either to the right hand or the left, the path upon which you have entered; and take the Spirit's witness to his own work upon your heart, which you so greatly desire: know this, be sure of this, yea, confident of this very thing, that he who has begun the good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

But some of you, it is probable, have been led in a way widely different to this. You know scarce any thing of that deep and agonizing distress on account of your sins, of which others speak. You cannot come to visions and revelations. There is, perhaps, not one text in the Bible which you can point out as being the means of imparting comfort to you more than another. Your want of marked experience makes you shrink from speaking of yourself, and fearful of coming short at the last. Consider for a moment, are you now really in the pilgrim's path, with your face directed to the heavenly

Zion? Have you heartily renounced the sins and pleasures and vanities of this evil world, and are you seeking supremely the salvation of Christ? If so, what was it that prevailed with you to do as you are now doing? Oh! be assured, however secretly, or gradually, or imperceptibly, the gracious resolution was formed, if it be really formed, and actually regulates your life, it is as truly the work of the Holy Spirit as if you could tell the time and manner and all the circumstances of your conversion. Perhaps you have had the privilege of intercourse with pious relatives from your earliest youth, and you can give no particular account of the time when gracious desires and heavenward hopes first dawned upon you; but of this you are certain, that you choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Or, perhaps, you were providentially thrown in the way of some eminent Christian, and the whole bent of your future life was either suddenly or gradually altered by what you observed and saw in him. You lost the keen relish which you once had for worldly pleasures and pursuits. What you heard of the evil of sin, and the danger of delay, arrested your conscience. The manner in which the Lord had manifested his grace and mercy to others, of whom you heard, caused your heart to burn within you. You resolved at once for Christ and his salvation; to forsake the foolish and live; and to cast in your lot among those who declare plainly that they are seeking a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And you have acted upon that resolution. Although you have been harassed and distressed—

“With many a conflict, many a doubt,”

you have never been driven from it. You have shown that you are heartily willing to give up all for Christ; and chiefly grieved that so many around you, on every side, and perhaps some who are united to you by the ties of nature, are unwilling to come away, but linger behind as yet in the City of Destruction. Now, every one of you, dear brethren, who answers to this description, may be of good courage. The great Interpreter bears witness to the reality of his work on your heart, and says, "Your setting out is good: for you have given credit to the truth." This, above every thing else, is the distinguishing mark of the generation of the upright. They rest upon the sure testimony of God respecting their own everlasting concerns. The instrument or medium through which the truth of God is made known to us is of little consequence. Whatever God has said respecting the danger of our condition, or the refuge which he has mercifully provided for the guilty; what he hates and what he loves; what he commands and what he forbids,—the true penitent gives credit to the truth, and acts upon it. He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true. Have you simply received the gospel message—given credit to it as the truth of God? and are you acting upon it? Have you, for the truth's sake, renounced all the pleasures of sin and the vanities of the world, and deliberately accepted of Christ to save you from your sins, and to reign over you for ever? This know, that the arm of the Lord has been revealed on behalf of every individual who thus gives credit to the gospel report. And we say to you, "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord

God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust."

III. We proceed to consider in the last place how the pilgrims were washed and sealed and clothed in the Interpreter's house. After the excellent lessons which they had been taught, and the cheering testimony they had received, we might have thought that they were now prepared to depart in peace, and to go on their way rejoicing. Still, however, for another most important purpose they were required to tarry for a while. The Interpreter would not allow them to depart until he had given orders for them to be taken to the bath : that there they might wash and be made clean from the dust and soil which they had gathered by travelling. These orders were minutely followed. Every one in the party, from the youngest to the oldest, had the benefit and the pleasure of a copious washing in the pure and limpid waters that gushed out for their use. Very delightful and refreshing was this process to them all. They washed away all the mire and dirt which had adhered to them from the boggy ground which they had passed at the first ; and they were cleansed from much of the dust and many defiling particles which they had brought with them out of the town, and which they had contracted in the rest of the way. They were wonderfully strengthened and enlivened by this process. They not only looked much fairer than they did before, but felt refreshed and renovated as if they had each awakened to a new and delightful existence. The Interpreter pronounced them fair as the moon : and then he called for the seal wherewith such were sealed as had been washed in his bath. So the seal was brought, and he set

his mark upon them, that they might be known in the places whither they were yet to go. This seal consisted of the image and superscription of the King; and it was engraved on the forehead of every one of them. It was to serve the threefold purpose of a sign, a memorial, and a token. As a sign, it was a mark of distinction, to set them apart from the rest of the world, as the special treasure and peculiar property of the King. As a memorial, it was to record the precious price which he had paid for their redemption, and the great things which he had done for them already. And as a token, it was a pledge of their final admission through the gates of the Celestial City, when their warfare should be accomplished, and the days of their mourning ended. In short, the sum and substance of this sealing was to answer the same purpose to our pilgrims that the ordinance of the passover answered to the Israelite. He was to show his son in that day, saying: "This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes; that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt." This seal greatly added to the beauty of the pilgrims, for it was an ornament to their faces. It increased also their dignity and gravity, insomuch that beholders looking upon them saw their face as it had been the face of an angel. After this, the Interpreter sent for them new garments; and they were every one arrayed in these. They consisted of fine linen, clean and white. When they were thus adorned, they began to be a terror one to the other; for none of them could see in themselves what they so greatly admired

in the other. Now therefore they began to esteem each other better than themselves. Thus they continued to say one to the other, "You are more comely than I." The children also stood amazed to see into what fashion they were brought.

In all this, dear brethren, we have most happily represented to us the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit upon all who are indeed the children of God. Are you indeed on pilgrimage to the Celestial City? It is the holy city: and without holiness no man can see the Lord. A poor defiled and depraved sinner cannot be admitted into heaven without experiencing the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost. The work of the Spirit is as essential to our salvation as the work of the Son, and the free mercy of the Father. "According to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord." Jesus came with water and with blood; purifying water, or the influence of his Holy Spirit, to wash away the defilement of our souls, as well as atoning blood to expiate our guilt and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. All who are washed in his atoning blood, are sanctified and renewed by his healing power. They are set apart by a new principle of holiness, as the peculiar people and property of the Lord. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." He has not only a robe of perfect righteousness in which to array them for their complete justification before God, but he has also real righteousness with which he endues them for their justification before men. He clothes them with pure linen, clean and white,

which is the righteousness of the saints. Do you know any thing of this washing of regeneration? Do you bear upon your forehead this seal of the living God? Have you indeed put on, and do you evidently wear before all men, the fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of the saints?

Two things I have especially to urge upon you. First, and above every thing else, see to it, that you have indeed come to Christ for justification. Then, as a believer in Jesus, seek earnestly for the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, in all his cleansing, sealing and gracious effects.

1. See to it that you first apply to Christ for justification. We can only obtain inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. There is no way to the Interpreter's house, except by coming first to Him who is the way and the door. The pilgrims had been admitted through the gate, before they obtained the precious benefits of which we have been speaking, in the Interpreter's house. And we, dear brethren, must come to Jesus, with all our sins and wants and burdens, before we can receive the promise of the Father, and partake of the rich effusions of the Holy Ghost the Comforter. I do not mean that we can come to Christ before we are taught and drawn of the Holy Spirit. Oh no! His gracious power begins the good work. He convinces of sin, and puts good desires into the heart. He shows the glory of Christ, and is the author of that precious faith by which we believe unto salvation. But the Holy Spirit is only imparted as a comforting, witnessing, sealing Spirit, to them that believe. The rivers of living waters only flow out of the soul that is united by a true and living faith to Christ. After the Ephesians believed

they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Have you believed on Christ for the pardon of your sins and the salvation of your soul? You have heard the word of truth; Has it become, by your thankful reception of it, the gospel of your salvation? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that his gracious Spirit may flow into your soul, in all his rich and sanctifying power. Jesus said, "He that believeth on me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water."

2. Finally, do you now believe? and are you, by simple faith, resting upon Christ to save you? Seek then earnestly at the throne of grace for all the spiritual blessings which are promised to you as a believer in Jesus. The precious ointment which was poured on Aaron's head ran down to the very skirts of his garment; and thus the meanest and the lowest part of his raiment was perfumed and dignified with the very unction that belonged only to the high-priest. By faith in Christ you are one with him; members of his flesh and of his bones. He is the Anointed One; the great High-Priest. He receives the Spirit without measure. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and of his fulness have all we received." From him the Holy Ghost is sent forth to the least and meanest of all believers, because they belong to him. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Go, therefore, and humbly ask, as a believer in Christ, to be washed and clothed and sealed, according to his gracious promise. And do not, by sinful and improper conduct, cause the holy Comforter to depart from you. "Quench not the Spirit." An angry, unkind, un-

feeling temper he cannot endure. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

HYMN.

GRACIOUS Spirit, come and seal us
With the signet of our King;
We are wounded, come and heal us;
Sad, but thou canst make us sing!

Never may we dare to grieve thee;
On us write our Father's name;
Make us, when our hearts receive thee,
Watchful, harmless, without blame.

Patient, humble, unassuming,
Give us all our Master's mind;
Make us fragrant, ever blooming,
To our proper place confined.

Save us from a false profession,
Save us from a double heart;
Every sin and hid transgression
Purge, and bid it all depart.

Without witness do not leave us
On thy work within us shine.
How canst thou, the Truth, deceive us?
Witness bear that we are thine.

Come and sanctify us wholly,
Wash us, clothe us, make us white,
Humble, upright, true, and holy,
Meet to dwell with saints in light.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, thou hast promised to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask thee: we come now into thy presence, humbly to ask for this best of all good things, in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour. May we all partake of his heavenly teaching. Oh make us truly the followers of Him, in all meekness and lowliness, who suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. May we abide with God in our calling, and fulfil, with a contented mind, the duties that belong to our several stations. May we none of us be satisfied with a form of godliness, or with making a fair show in the flesh, while destitute of fruit, and spiritually dead before thee. Oh grant that through the Spirit we may mortify all our corrupt affections and desires, and have every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Let thy Holy Spirit, we humbly beseech thee, bear witness with our spirits that we are thy children. May we have the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, that we may always be confident with the blessed confidence of thine adopted children. By whatever means we have been induced to turn our feet into the way of thy testimonies, may we know that we are of God; that thou hast indeed begun the good work in us; and that thou wilt be the finisher as well as the author of our faith. Oh that we may have the knowledge of salvation through the remission of our sins; that the joy of the Lord may be our strength, and that we may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. Wash us, we pray thee, in the blood of that immaculate Lamb, which was slain to take away the sin of the world; that, whatsoever defilements we may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world, through the lusts of the flesh or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, our souls may be presented pure and without spot before thee. Seal us, we beseech thee, unto the day of redemption. Clothe us in the robe of Jehovah our Righteousness. And, oh grant, that being washed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, we may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. All this we ask in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

LECTURE V.

THE GOOD MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST.

How beauteous are their feet
Who stand on Zion's hill!
Who bring salvation on their tongues,
And words of peace reveal!

How charming is their voice!
How sweet the tidings are!
Zion, behold thy Saviour King,
He reigns and triumphs here.

How happy are our ears
That hear this joyful sound,
Which kings and prophets waited for,
And sought, but never found!

How blessed are our eyes
That see this heavenly light!
Prophets and kings desired it long,
But died without the sight.

The Lord makes bare his arm
Through all the earth abroad;
Let every nation now behold
Their Saviour and their God.

HEBREWS xiii. 7, 8.

REMEMBER THEM WHICH HAVE THE RULE OVER YOU, WHO HAVE SPOKEN UNTO YOU THE WORD OF GOD; WHOSE FAITH FOLLOW, CONSIDERING THE END OF THEIR CONVERSATION: JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER.

NEXT in importance to the direct and special teaching of the Holy Spirit, and as the means by which his further influence is to be obtained, is the stated ministry of God's holy word. It is a real

blessing, though numbers despise it, to be under the regular instruction of a good minister of Jesus Christ. The great advantage that results from a due attendance upon the ministry of the word, is establishment both in judgment and in heart. Immediately after the apostle had insisted upon a proper attention to those who had the spiritual charge and oversight of the Hebrews, he proceeds to point out the evil it would prevent and the benefit it would secure. "Be not," he says, "carried about with divers and strange doctrines." The ministry was appointed to prevent this evil, "that we be not henceforth as children, driven to and fro by every wind of doctrine." And then he adds: "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." This is the benefit secured by a proper attendance upon the ministry of the word, that all believers may "come to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

When our pilgrims departed from the Interpreter's house, they were placed under the guidance of a famous conductor, whose name was Greatheart. This is the emblem of a wise and faithful minister, bold for God and valiant for the truth. We have now to consider, how the travellers succeeded under the care and guidance of this excellent conductor. We may arrange the subject under these three particulars:—

- I. Their arrival at the place of the Cross.
 - II. The solemn warning which they met afterwards, and
 - III. Lastly, their progress up the hill Difficulty.
- May we all be quickened and encouraged in our spiritual course by the things which shall be spoken.



I. As to their arrival at the place of the Cross. Before the pilgrims were dismissed, the Interpreter summoned one of his men-servants, Greatheart by name, and charged him to take his sword and shield and helmet, and conduct these pilgrims to the house Beautiful. The servant was soon ready with his weapons; and forward they all proceeded, the conductor leading the way. Thus they journeyed until they came to the place where Christian's burden had fallen from his back and tumbled into a sepulchre. Very precious were the instructions and very rich was the experience which our pilgrims here enjoyed. They lingered long in this deeply affecting and solemnly delightful place; and here they hung with mute attention upon the words of their conductor, while he fully explained and set before them the precious benefits which all true pilgrims obtain in this place. It must be remembered, that when Christian came here, in addition to losing his burden, he was clothed with a change of raiment and had a roll with a seal given to him. The meaning of all this was now explained by their guide to the pilgrims. He told them what the King's Son, the Prince of Peace, had here suffered and obtained for all poor pilgrims that came forth out of the City of Destruction. He had left the unutterable glory of the Celestial City; he had become a pilgrim himself; and that penalty which, by violation of the unalterable law of the Celestial City, had been incurred, was here satisfied. Because the Son of the Blessed, in the form of a pilgrim, had here suffered the extremity of the law's denouncement against transgressors, all weary and heavy-laden pilgrims, when they come to this place, and fix their eyes upon that Cross, their burdens tumble into the sepulchre, and

their debts are all discharged at once. In addition to this unspeakable benefit which the King's Son had here procured for poor pilgrims by his suffering, the guide also pointed out what he had obtained for them by the active obedience which he paid in their stead. Christian had been clothed as well as released from his burden at this place. At great length, the conductor explained in what this clothing consisted. It was nothing else than a royal robe, which had been woven out by the Prince himself in the days of his pilgrimage. Here he had finished it, and left it entire for the use of his pilgrims, that they might be clothed in it from head to foot, and that so arrayed they might be able to stand approved and accepted, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, in the piercing sight of the Sovereign Judge. As they stood and gazed and listened to all this, their hearts began to burn within them; and they now began to understand and perceive how it was that Christian had been released from his burden, and was induced to leap for joy. The spectacle which they were now beholding, with all its amazing consequences and all its hidden virtues, cut off those things which could not be cut off by any other means. And, indeed, it was to give a proof of the virtue of this place that Christian had been suffered to carry his burden thus far. This place, too, was the source of sacred joy, as well as the place where rest is found and raiment imparted to pilgrims. Christian had here been marked, and received his roll, and had abundantly rejoiced. The effect was the same on the present party. In very glowing language did Christiana testify that she had here renewed her strength and increased her joy. "Though my heart," she said, "was joyous before, yet it is ten times

more lightsome and joyous now. And I am persuaded by what I have felt, (though I have felt but little as yet,) that if the most burdened man in the world was here, and did see and believe as I now do, it would make his heart the more merry and blithe." She was deeply affected by contemplating here the way and means by which all the blessings which pilgrims enjoy are procured for them; and wonderfully was her heart drawn out in love to Him who had procured these blessings in such a way. She felt, too, an earnest longing for those they had left behind to behold that sight, and to experience its efficacy. Even of those who had opposed and derided her setting out the most, she said, "I wish now with all my heart that they were here. Surely, surely, their hearts would be affected; nor could any of their fears, or any of their lusts, prevail with them to go home again, and refuse to become good pilgrims." This language clearly showed that she had heard the call of the King; that her eye was opened to see the glory, and her heart opened to feel the attraction, of the object before them.

Now all this is deeply affecting, and full of instruction to each of us. Every true minister of the gospel is a conductor of pilgrims to the Celestial City. He is a servant of Jesus Christ, and he has been moved by the Holy Spirit to take upon him his office and ministry; and he has been sent forth by the same Spirit to instruct others, with doctrines and exhortations from the Holy Scriptures, in the way everlasting. The first proof which he gives of guiding aright those who are committed to his charge, is, to take them directly forward to the place of the Cross: I mean, to proclaim straightway the doctrine of the Cross. If we did not determine to

know nothing else among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified, we could not be true guides, or really conduct you to heaven. To bring perishing sinners and a crucified Saviour together, is our great object and principal aim. It is Jesus Christ whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man, in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in him. A believing view of the cross is the genuine source, the only source of pardon, justification and sanctification. These are the inestimable benefits which by his precious blood-shedding he hath obtained for us. Oh that you could, every one, be effectually stirred up to come as poor sinners to the great sacrifice of the cross, for a personal interest in all these blessings; come for pardon to the Saviour's cross. The blood of the cross is the price of your pardon. However heavily the burden of your sins may press upon you; however deeply you may be indebted by your sins to the violated justice of God, and however great your inability to pay one farthing of all that great debt—only look, as a true penitent, with the eye of faith to the cross of Christ, and your burden will fall to the ground, and tumble into the sepulchre of Him who died and was buried and rose again. You are not required to pay any thing of the great debt which you owe; Christ has paid it all. It was exacted from him. He paid it that you might be discharged. Only believe, and your guilt is transferred to him, who bare our sins in his own body on the tree, and you are pardoned;—fully, freely, and for ever pardoned.—Come for justification to the cross of Christ. He who died there brings in everlasting righteousness, as well as makes reconciliation for iniquity. He finished upon the cross a course of unsinning

obedience to that law which demands in all things perfect obedience. That obedience is the justifying righteousness of all that believe. "By one man's obedience shall many be made righteous." The perfect obedience of Christ is put on the believer as a robe of righteousness. It is the obedience of him who is God as well as man. This is the name whereby He is called by whom it was wrought out, Jehovah our Righteousness. And this is the name which describes the obedience paid by Christ to the law instead of his people, the righteousness of God. "He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Only come by true faith to the place of the cross, and you shall be interested in all the divine Saviour has done, as well as all that he suffered, for his people. He who died for our sins, rose again for our justification. If you know the blessedness of the man whose transgressions are forgiven, you will know the blessedness of him to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works. You cannot come to Christ and not partake of the full benefit of his perfect work. Like the prodigal, you shall not only be pardoned, but the best robe shall be brought forth and put upon you; and because you are clothed in this robe of righteousness, (interested in the everlasting righteousness of God your Saviour,) you stand even now accepted and complete in the sight of God, and he loves you and regards you as if the borrowed robe of righteousness in which you are arrayed were actually your own. In short, the perfect obedience paid by your Surety is imputed to you, and laid to your account; and thus God looks upon you as if you had actually fulfilled the whole law yourself, and were entitled to the re-

ward which it promises to obedience.—Come for sanctification to the cross of Christ. Sanctifying grace flows down to the believer, through the atoning work of Christ. We obtain inheritance among them that are sanctified through faith which is in Christ Jesus. When a poor penitent comes to him for pardon and justification, a union is formed between his soul and his Saviour, and the Holy Spirit is communicated in all his sanctifying and comforting influence. He will not leave his people comfortless, he will send to them that other Comforter; and henceforth sin shall not have dominion over them, for they are not under the law, but under grace. If your heart was in some measure joyful before, it will be ten times more lightsome and joyful now. And if, before, you were burdened and distressed, now will your heart become merry and blithe. You will feel the constraining power of the love of Christ. You will long earnestly for sinners of every description to be brought to your Saviour. You are confident that if they only had a real view of Christ, all their fears would fly, and all their corruptions would be mastered.

II. We proceed now to speak of the warning spectacle presented to our pilgrims. They went on till they came to the place where Simple, Sloth, and Presumption were sleeping when Christian had passed that way. The sleep of these three men was now changed into the sleep of death. They were now hung up in irons a little way off on the other side. The gentle spirit of Mercy was first arrested by this terrible sight, and she asked what it meant. Their whole history was faithfully recounted by the conductor. He described their real

character and the evil of their doings. They had been sore hinderers of pilgrims; doing all they could to induce others to imitate their folly and sloth, and at the same time to persuade them that they would do well at the last. But their end was according to their work. A little while ago, they were fast asleep and saw no danger; now, they were hung up as a solemn warning to all who should pass by. Mercy could hardly believe that any would be persuaded to follow their pernicious ways. But she was informed that great numbers had been turned out of the way by their advice and example, and had become even as they. In addition to this, they had presumed to speak reproachfully of the Lord of pilgrims, as if he were an austere man and a hard master. They said also, that the land was not half so good as some pretended; and in a great variety of ways they spoke grievous things and contemptuously of all those whose wisdom, or zeal, or fear of deception, was a reproach to them. These were the persons upon whom the Lord of the way had executed justice, and hung them up as an example for the benefit of others. Who could be sorry for them! Mercy herself was obliged to acquiesce in the equity of their punishment. Their crimes were engraved on a pillar of brass, and there stood as a beacon to way-faring men. The pilgrims considered it a great favour that such fatal deceivers had been taken away, before their arrival in that place. Who knows, they said, what they might have done to such as us!

Let us pause a moment to receive instruction from this example of severity. The instances of righteous severity recorded in the Bible, and those which we witness in providence, on our way through the wilderness, are all intended for our warning and admo-

nition. How often was God angry with his people when he brought them out of Egypt and was leading them to Canaan! "With many of them God was not well-pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness." What fearful examples were made of them! How were they plagued for their idolatries and their fornications, their tempting of Christ and their rebellious murmurs! "These things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted." And as we have heard, have we not seen on our way to Zion? Which of us have not been startled, repeatedly startled by the affecting instances which we have beheld, of judgment overtaking notorious offenders? How often have we seen the terrible end of simple ones in love with simplicity! I mean, sinners determined to keep their sins. They refused to be warned. They would indulge their sinful lusts and unruly passions. For a little while no bad consequences ensued; but ere long, a dart struck through their liver. God made their own sin the instrument of their destruction, and all who saw their awful end were compelled to say: This hath God done! The slothful, too, as well as the simple, we have seen to be made an example of righteous indignation. We have known persons live from week to week, and from year to year, in the most fearful unconcern about their souls. They saw no danger, and still it was their cry: "A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep." They neglected the precious opportunity of the Sabbath; they neglected the word of God; they neglected prayer; they would not open their eyes; they would not think, until at length they were struck with the stroke of death! The day of grace was over, and we saw them sum-

moned into the presence of God, the Judge of all. Still more dreadful is the example that has been made of presumptuous offenders. After all their jests and scoffs, their hard speeches and their strong presumption, oh how suddenly did they consume and perish, and come to a fearful end ! The causes of their ruin seemed to be graven with an iron pen ; to be held up for our warning, and to say to every one who passed by : Pilgrim, beware of sin ! Pilgrim, watch and pray ! Pilgrim, be clear of presumptuous offences ! “ All these things happened unto them for ensamples : and they are written for our admonition : wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

III. We have, lastly, to advert to the progress of the pilgrims up the hill Difficulty. Leaving this affecting spectacle, the conductor brought them to the spring that rises, for the benefit of pilgrims, at the foot of the hill. Some evil-disposed persons had injured the clearness of the spring ; but the guide instructed the pilgrims how they might separate the dregs of earth from the water, and so use it for their relief and enjoyment. Then he showed them the two by-ways that were hard by ; the path of Danger and the path of Destruction ; and he reminded them of the sad end of Formality and Hypocrisy, who had ventured upon these roads. Since Christian passed, an important change had been made. You see, the conductor said, these ways are now stopped up with chains and posts and a ditch ; yet some choose to adventure here, rather than take the pains to go up the hill. They might see, if they would, the notice put up, *No road this way*. They might hear, if they would, the voice of the King's

labourers telling them that they are going wrong. But they still persist in their own way. It is a hard thing for them to break through all the fences and obstructions that they meet when they enter upon the dangerous road; but they choose to incur this rather than the exertion and fatigue of the up-hill road to the city. The pilgrims, however, pursued the safe though the difficult path. Trying it proved to every one of them, from the oldest to the youngest. Christiana said, quite out of breath, "No marvel if they that love their ease more than their souls choose to themselves a smoother way." Mercy declared that she must sit down; and the least of the children began to cry. But the faithful conductor knew how to speak a word in season to such as were weary. His heart was enlarged, and he abounded in love and compassion for those that were under his care. "Come, come," he said, "sit not down here, for a little above is the Prince's arbour." Then he took the little boy by the hand and led him thereto.

Here, for the present, we will leave them all; and try in few words to apply the subject individually to our own heart. Are any of you, dear brethren, toiling your way up the difficult hill, and pressing forward to the heavenly city? Oh that I could encourage you to hold on your way, and to run with patience the race that is set before you. Think of the dreadful end of such as turn aside to their crooked ways; and shrink not from any difficulties that you meet in the right path. Be sure that you drink of the brook in the way, that you may lift up your head, and rise superior to every discouragement. The pure word of God, received in faith, and separated from the fancies and delusions of men, will refresh your soul, and give you strength for every approaching

trial. Be sure that you turn not aside either to the right hand or to the left, to avoid your allotted trial. Whatever it may appear to the eye, or however it may feel to the flesh, the steep and the narrow path is alone the path of safety. Danger is on one side, and destruction on the other. Go forward if you would not perish with hypocrites and formalists. Think of the desperate hardships and amazing struggles which men encounter in the ways of sin; how many bonds they burst; how many checks they resist; and how freely they sacrifice their time and their health, their comfort and their reputation, for the sake of their lusts and pleasures;—and will not you, for the sake of heaven and glory, and for your Saviour's sake, endure hardness, and hold on the path of duty a little longer? Oh love not a little present ease more than the everlasting salvation of your soul! Do not linger. Do not relax. The effort which you have now to make may be great and painful, but look forward and look upward, and as your day is, your strength shall be. Only hold out a little longer, and you will come to a place where you may safely rest. The harbour of the Prince is nigh at hand. There you shall enjoy the refreshing where-with he causes the weary to rest. In your patience possess your soul. Let patience have her perfect work. Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord.

HYMN.

REMEMBER them who point the way
To Zion, and their voice obey ;
While Jesus and his word they teach,
And in their Master's name beseech.

Remember how they seek to guide
To Him who once for sinners died ;
And tell that pardon, righteousness,
And grace in Him you shall possess.

Remember how they ever cried,
To warn of such as turn aside ;
And pointed out th' apostate's end,
To make you fearful to offend.

Remember how, with promise sweet,
They onward urged your weary feet ;
The words in season, as they fell,
Refreshed your soul, and all was well.

Remember Him, whose saving name
And precious merits they proclaim ;
Receive the warning word they give,
Embrace their true report, and live.

Remember, too, in all your prayers,
The faithful pastor's toils and cares ;
And day and night incessant cry
For heav'nly unction from on high.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY God, the giver of all good gifts, who of thy Divine Providence hast appointed the gospel ministry in thy Church : give thy grace, we humbly beseech thee, to all those who are called to any office and administration in the same ; and so replenish them with the truth of thy doctrine, and endue them with innocency of life, that they may faithfully serve before thee, to the glory of thy great name, and the benefit of thy holy Church. May they determine to know nothing else but Jesus Christ and him crucified. May all their warnings and admoni-

tions be taken from thy holy word. Give unto them all the tongue of the learned, that they may know how to speak a word in season to such as are weary; and grant, we beseech thee, most merciful Father, that thy word spoken by their mouth may have such success that it may never be spoken in vain. May we, and all thy people, have grace to hear and receive what they deliver from thy most holy word, or agreeable to the same, as the means of our salvation. May we remember that the end of their conversation is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. Oh grant that we may all come to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be washed from all our sins in his most precious blood; to be clothed in the robe of his perfect righteousness, for our complete justification; and to be renewed in the spirit of our minds by his sanctifying grace. May we be effectually warned by the fearful example of those who have turned aside and perished in the way. May we not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Save us, we beseech thee, from loving simplicity, from indulging sloth, and from committing presumptuous sins. And oh! give to every one of us such supplies of grace and strength as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all difficulties and temptations, until we are brought to the mount Zion, and the New Jerusalem, and the city of the living God. All this we ask in the name of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory for ever and ever.

LECTURE VI.

THE RESTING-PLACE, THE WARNING SPECTACLE, AND THE LIONS.

BLEST are the souls that hear and know
The gospel's joyful sound;
Peace shall attend the path they go,
And light their steps surround.

Their joy shall bear their spirits up
Through their Redeemer's name;
His righteousness exalts their hope,
Nor Satan dares condemn.

The Lord, our glory and defence,
Strength and salvation gives;
Israel, thy King for ever reigns,
Thy God for ever lives.

PSALM xxxiv. 19.

MANY ARE THE AFFLICTIONS OF THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT THE LORD DELIVERETH
HIM OUT OF THEM ALL.

IF the Christian's course be properly compared to a journey by land, it is no less properly compared to a voyage by sea. And what a voyage it generally proves! The true penitent must not expect to have plain sailing all the way to the desired haven. The winds of trouble will blow, and the waves of temptation will swell. But this is his consolation: if, indeed, he is united by a true and living faith to the Saviour of sinners, he shall arrive at last

in the port of safety; he shall so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that at last he shall come to the land of everlasting rest. And every wave that rises, every wind that blows, however it may toss him about or fill him with fear at the time, shall, in one way or another, contribute to the final prosperity of his voyage. How can he be apprehensive of any fatal shipwreck, when one sits at the helm whom winds and seas obey? Soon he will enter the fair haven of everlasting rest. Then there will be a great calm. And after all his painful tossings and distracting fears, how glad will he be when he comes, with all his treasures, into the desired haven,

“And not a wave of trouble rolls
Across his peaceful breast!”

“Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.”

We left our pilgrims mid-way up the hill Difficulty. We have now to consider—

I. Their experience at the resting-place.

II. Another warning spectacle which they beheld; and,

III. Lastly, what befell them when they came to the place of the lions.

I. As to their experience at the place of rest. They had now all arrived at the harbour half-way up the hill, where Christian for a while had lost his roll. Being much tired with climbing, they felt how sweet is rest to the weary, and admired the tender consideration of their Prince in appointing so seasonably such a place. Mindful of Christian's losses here, they were careful of sleeping. The conductor kindly encouraged the feeblest and the least that

were under his charge, and received the thanks of the little boy whom he had led to the arbour when he began to cry. This child now manifested the spirit of a pilgrim. When the guide asked him what he thought of pilgrimage now: "Sir," he said, "I was almost beat out of heart; but I thank you for lending me a hand at my need. And I remember now what my mother hath told me, that the way to heaven is as a ladder, and the way to hell is as down a hill. But," he added, "I had rather go up the ladder to life, than down the hill to death." When some one said, "To go down the hill is easy," with wonderful quickness he replied, "The day is coming when, in my opinion, going down the hill will be hardest of all." The whole party not only rested themselves here for a while, but they partook of the provisions which they had brought from the house where they last had stopped. At length the guide said to them, "The day wears away:" and proposed that they should proceed on their journey. So they rose to depart. Still, however, in some measure they found this arbour a losing place. Christiana here forgot something which had been given her by the Interpreter for support by the way; and some delay was occasioned by having to send back to recover it. The cause of such losses at this place was very faithfully pointed out by the guide. The cause, he said, is sleep or forgetfulness. Some sleep when they should keep awake, and some forget when they should remember. This is the reason why often, at resting-places, pilgrims in some things come off losers. Pilgrims should watch, and remember what they have already received, under their greatest enjoyments. For want of this, oftentimes their rejoicing ends in tears, and their sunshine in a cloud.

There are few Christians who have not repeatedly found the truth of all this. Are you indeed on your way to Zion? Set a double watch upon your heart in all time of your wealth, and at every place of refreshment, where you pause a while for breath and rest on your pilgrimage. The Lord whom you serve is not a hard master. "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are but dust." He knows that we cannot without any pause struggle with the difficulties that oppose our way to heaven. Rest for a while and places for renewing the strength and spirits, are absolutely necessary. "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." And shall not his fatherly care provide for his children every thing which his heavenly wisdom knows to be good for them? Yes, dear brethren, when your difficulties increase, and your spirit is ready to faint within you, the Lord, by his providence and grace, will surely give you the needful rest and the needful refreshment. He will make you ashamed of your unbelieving fears. When did his mercy ever forsake those, in their distresses, who humbly relied on his help? In due time, if you only trust in him, he will show you how sweet is rest to a labouring man, and how good and gracious he is in most seasonably providing for his people all things that are needful both for their souls and their bodies. Parents and children, consider here again what a sweet view we have in this place of a little child on the road to heaven. A little child may be a true pilgrim to the Celestial City. Our Lord Jesus Christ doth not deny his grace and mercy to such little ones, but most lovingly doth call them to him. Dear young people, do you want to go to heaven, and to be happy for ever in glory? I know you do. But are

you willing to toil up the hill Difficulty, which leads directly to that happy place? Are you willing to read and pray, to forsake the company of wicked people, and to give up your own will and your own wishes to the will of God, and the will of those whom God commands you to obey? All this is hard. It is like climbing up a steep hill. But oh, remember, the way to heaven is as a ladder, and the way to hell is as down a hill. Would you not rather go up the ladder to life than down the hill to death? If sinners entice you, do not consent. If they tell you how smooth and pleasant and happy it will be for you to run with them down the hill of sin and folly and carelessness, be sure that you do not believe them. Think for a moment of the fearful pit that opens its mouth at the bottom of the hill. And say, as this little boy said, "The time is coming when, in my opinion, going down the hill will be the hardest of all." Yes, dear friends, indeed it will. When the short and giddy course of sin and vanity has been run, and when the small and great who have forgotten God and neglected his great salvation shall hear the dreadful sentence, "Depart, ye cursed," then it will be found that going down the hill is the hardest of all.

Parents, tell your children this. They may not appear to think of it at the time, but afterward it may come with wonderful power to their hearts, and they may say: "I remember now what my mother told me." Oh how gladly would we, ministers, take your little ones by the hand, and try to help them over the difficulties that they will find in the way to heaven! But we cannot do much unless you will do your part too. Train them up in the way they should go. Tell them of the dreadful

consequences of sin. Tell them of the love of Jesus Christ for little children. Pray for them and pray with them; and seek, above every thing else, that he may lay his gracious hand upon them and make them his. Then if he is pleased to lay his afflictive hand upon them, and you have to see them droop and die, do not be overmuch cast down. Death, in whatever form it may come, is only a messenger of his. It comes to do his pleasure, and to bear them, by a shorter road than that which you are travelling, to the Celestial City.

For yourself, use with moderation the provisions which have been given you for your refreshment by the way. Never mistake the comforts and enjoyments which are occasionally granted to you as you travel, for what you are expecting at your journey's end. Use these enjoyments for the object they are designed to answer: to renew your strength and refresh your spirit, not to make you indolent and forgetful of the rest of the journey that is still before you. Sleep not when you ought to watch; forget not what you ought to remember. Oh how many, for want of watchfulness and prayer, come off losers by the manner in which they use their comforts! Our sweetest comforts and most seasonable blessings will become a snare to our worldly hearts, unless we are very careful.

“We should suspect some danger nigh,
When they inspire delight.”

Use, without abusing, the temporal blessings that are mercifully afforded you, and be ready at all times to gird up your loins, and to rise and depart!

II. We proceed now to consider the next warning spectacle which the pilgrims beheld. Proceeding

from the harbour of rest, they came to the place where Mistrust and Timorous had formerly met Christian, and endeavoured to deter him with their report of the lions. But these two men, like the other three that we considered in our last lecture, had now become a warning to the pilgrims. They beheld a stage erected near the highway, with a plate containing an inscription upon it. Here they read, "This stage was built for the punishment of such as shall be afraid to go further on pilgrimage. Also on this stage, Mistrust and Timorous were burnt through the tongue with a hot iron, for endeavouring to hinder Christian on his journey." The punishment which had been inflicted upon these evil speakers brought to the recollection of the travellers the sentence that is written: "What shall be given unto thee, or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper." After this, under the guidance of their conductor, they proceeded onward till they came within sight of the lions. The conductor stood in no fear of the lions; but when the party had them fully in view, the children, who were going first, of their own accord stepped behind, and had no wish any longer to take the lead.

Before we consider how they got past this fearful place, let us pause for a moment to receive instruction from the warning spectacle of which we have been speaking. This example, of more evil-doers overthrown in the wilderness, is to put us on our guard against the very common, but most ruinous offences, of unbelieving fear and evil-speaking. Do you, dear brethren, profess to be on your way to the heavenly city? Oh! let nothing induce you to draw back. Give no heed to the representations of

fearful and unbelieving men. Think of the dreadful end of numbers who set out, and appeared to run well for a season, and then drew back, and proved themselves apostates. What unhappiness and misery do they meet even in this present world! Who is it that has said: "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him?" If the Lord will have no pleasure in us, what pleasure can we have in any thing which the world can afford? How dismal must be the feeling of the apostate, with his certain fearful looking for of fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary: and how terrible will his doom be when he shall be excluded for ever from the holy city, and experience the bitter pains of eternal death! "The fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death!" Oh! have the true fear of God before your eyes and within your heart. Then you will be inspired with such strong confidence and holy boldness that you will face any danger, incur any hardship, sooner than kindle the wrath of Almighty God against you, and provoke his displeasure.

"Fear him, ye saints, and you will then
Have nothing else to fear."

Remember who has said: "Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Or again, do you profess the religion of the gracious Saviour? If you would not bring a sad reproach upon that worthy name whereby you are

called, and if you would not be disappointed of salvation at the last, take care that you keep a strong bridle upon your tongue. It is an unruly member, and nothing but a strong bridle and much grace will be sufficient to keep it in order. It is not, my brethren, an unmeaning emblem that is here held up for our warning: a man burnt through the tongue with a hot iron for endeavouring to hinder Christian on his journey. Slanderers and hinderers of God's word by their false and foolish tongue, are often in God's providence held up, as it were, for a solemn warning to others. God makes their own tongue to fall upon them. They are ensnared by the words of their lips. They lose their character, and they pierce themselves through with many sorrows, by the words of their mouth and by the sins of their lips. Let us all seriously lay these things to heart. There is not a plainer mark given in the Bible of an unconverted state, than the possession of an unbridled tongue. "If any man among you seemeth to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." Which of us has not reason to pray: "Set a watch, O Lord, upon my mouth; keep the door of my lips!" If you would be kept from transgressing with your tongue, first, and above every thing else, consider how displeasing it is to God, and how ruinous to yourself, and how injurious to others. Then, as a means to avoid this sin, do not love to talk much. Keep your mouth as it were with a bridle. Why should you destroy yourself? "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin." It is better sometimes to keep silence, yea, even from good words, than to run the almost certain risk of saying something that would have been far better unsaid. Can love of pre-



sent peace and enjoyment of life have any influence upon you? "He that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile." Can the fear of doing mischief on the most extensive scale at all move you? And would you be afraid to scatter sparks among stores of gunpowder? "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. So is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." Can the dread of signal punishment in the world to come make you tremble? Oh remember the solemn account for idle words in the day of judgment. Surely all this will cause you to take heed to your ways, that you offend not with your tongue. It is indeed an evil utterly beyond your own power to cure. "The tongue can no man tame." But what you cannot do, the almighty power of the Holy Spirit can do for you. Only experience in your heart his transforming grace, and then your speech will be gracious too. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

III. We proceed to consider the experience of our travellers, when they were actually come to the place of the lions. We have already mentioned how the children got behind as soon as they obtained a distant sight of these fierce-looking creatures. The conductor drew his sword, with intent to make way for the pilgrims, in spite of the lions. But a desperate character, of the race of the giants, was there standing; and he had undertaken the cruel and wicked task of backing the lions, and setting them on at the pilgrims who should pass. This opposer

was called Bloodyman; and as his name was, so was he. He positively declared that the party should not pass; and that if they attempted it, he would cause the lions to devour them. By his means, the way of late had been little occupied, and was almost all grown over with grass. The travellers for some time past had been made to walk through by-paths. The giant positively refused to grant a passage to the pilgrims. But the guide boldly advanced to meet him, and laid upon him so heavily with his sword that he was compelled to retreat. Still, however, retreating, he indignantly said, "Will you slay me upon mine own ground?" To this it was replied, that he was an obstructor of passengers on the King's highway; that by his murders and cruelties his life was forfeited; and that now his destructions should come to a perpetual end. Then was he brought prostrate to the ground,—his helmet was cleft in twain; and by another stroke of the sharp sword of the conductor, his right arm was cut off clean from his shoulder-blade. Thus he was left to die, and all his power to do further mischief was entirely gone. The lions being chained, the guide knew well that when there was none to back them, they could not reach such as kept in the middle of the way. He said, therefore, to the party he was leading: "Come now, follow me, and no hurt shall happen to you from the lions." They went, therefore, on, but the women trembled as they passed by them; the boys also looked as if they would die; but they all got by without further hurt. They were now close by the porter's lodge, that belongs to the house Beautiful, where they were to remain for the present. The porter opened immediately, for he knew the guide's voice. He had oftentimes

been on the same errand before. He soon explained what was his business. By the command of his Master, he had brought some pilgrims to that house, who were to lodge there. His battle with the giant accounted for their late arrival. But now, his commission being duly executed, he must return to his place, and to him that sent him. Great was the sorrow of the whole company of pilgrims at the prospect of parting with their kind and valiant conductor; and from the eldest to the youngest, they all petitioned that he would still conduct them to the very end of their journey. To this he replied: "I am at my Lord's commandment. If he shall allot me to be your guide quite through, I shall willingly wait upon you. But here you failed at the first; for when he bade me come thus far with you, then you should have asked that I might go with you all the way, and he would have granted your request. Now I must withdraw. The task which he assigned me is finished." So he bade them all farewell, and returned to his place.

Two lessons we may learn from this part of our subject; a lesson of thankfulness and a lesson of caution. The cutting off of the bloody man, who encouraged the lions, may teach us a lesson of thankfulness. In former times, they who desired to live godly in Christ Jesus, and to worship God according to his own most holy word, have often been exposed to the most furious persecutions. No one could profess himself a follower of Christ, and determine to be ruled by his word and will, without incurring dangers and sufferings of which we know nothing in the day in which we live. Then, as it were, the highways were unoccupied. They who taught the way of the Lord truly were removed into a corner; and if any

ventured boldly to assert the supreme authority of God's word over all the decrees and ordinances of man that contradicted that word, they ran as it were into the mouth of the lions. The monster Persecution, like a cruel and blood-thirsty giant, in the shape of profane and ungodly magistrates and judges, had no feeling or compassion for the people of God. He set on the lions against them. By reviving old and superstitious laws, the origin of a dark and superstitious age, and putting these in force against the generation of the upright, he breathed nothing but slaughter and threatening against them, and made havoc of them, and scattered and destroyed them on every side. Oh, how thankful we ought to be that this giant is slain! In our country, at any rate, his arm is cut off; and we are permitted to confess the true faith of God's holy name without any making us afraid. It is a great blessing to live under a mild government and wise laws, where religion is upheld and encouraged rather than trampled down and opposed. It is the word of God that has obtained for us this victory and this liberty. Wherever the Bible has free course and is glorified, superstition and oppression fall to the ground. It is the sword of the Spirit which cuts off the arm of the oppressor, and gives the death-wound to tyrannical power.

"Where truth deigns to come,
Her sister Liberty will not be far."

2. Finally, we may learn a lesson of caution from the conductor's parting address to the pilgrims. He told them that he was entirely at the command and disposal of his great Master; and that if he was only engaged in doing his commandment, it was all the same to him whatever that commandment might be.

At the same time he told the pilgrims, when they all so earnestly begged for him to remain with them, that here they had failed at the first. That request, had it been preferred to the Interpreter ere they set out, would certainly have been granted. See, dear brethren, how much comfort and how many advantages we lose for want of opening our mouth wide in prayer. We have not, because we ask not. Oh, let us all consider, that if we serve the Lord Christ, all our happiness and all our usefulness consist in doing his pleasure and fulfilling the work which he has given us to do. And whatever blessings appear to be necessary, because of our weakness and frailty, to bring us safe to the end of our pilgrimage, ask for these blessings, and they shall be given to you. Do not, however, neglect the proper time for asking. Here, alas! we are all too apt to fail. The acceptable time for preferring our petitions to the great King is like a favourable time which, if once suffered to pass, can never be recalled. Even when our salvation is not endangered, Christians often suffer great loss, and forfeit much comfort, because they have not more fully, more largely, and more particularly brought their matters before the Lord in prayer. How strong is the encouragement, "Ask, and ye shall have, that your joy may be full!" How unlimited is the promise, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall have them." Remember that He to whom you pray is able to do for you exceeding abundantly above all you can ask or think.

"With heaven and earth at his command,
He waits to answer prayer."

Be sure that you do not suffer the favourable time for presenting your petitions to pass by unimproved.

“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.” You will find peace and relief in the very act of unburdening your wants and desires before the throne of the heavenly grace. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

HYMN.

O THOU, by whose appointment wise
The way to joy through sorrow lies,
Send, Lord, thy promised aid to me,
That as my day my strength may be.

When toiling up the rugged way,
My spirit sinks with sore dismay,
Then let me fresh springs find in thee,
That as my day my strength may be.

If rest and comfort for a while
Shall on my heavenward passage smile,
Oh, keep me from declining free,
That as my day my strength may be.

If in my path mine eyes survey
The men who perished in the way,
Then let me cry, “Uphold thou me,”
That as my day my strength may be.

If dangers press, and dreadful foes,
Like lions fierce, my way oppose;
Then let me thy salvation see,
And as my day my strength shall be.

PRAYER.

O THOU that hearest prayer, and who hast promised to give us all things that we ask, believing in the name of thy dear Son, pour down upon us at this time the spirit of grace and supplication. We humbly ask for thy blessing upon the things which we have now heard. Sanctify to us all our enjoyments; and preserve us from the evils to which we are exposed in our days of prosperity. May we never forget that this is not our rest, and that our true and final resting-place is in heaven. May we train up our children for eternity, and not for the world; and may none of our earthly cares, nor any of our earthly comforts, ever cause us to loiter in the way everlasting. Lord, grant that we may learn wisdom from every warning spectacle that is presented to us on the way to Zion. May we sanctify the Lord God in our hearts, and make him our fear, and sin our dread. May we be more afraid of sin than of anything else. Set a watch, O Lord, upon our mouth; keep the door of our lips. Let the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our redeemer. Save us, we beseech thee, from the oppressions of men. If our souls be among lions, and we should meet with blood-thirsty men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, may we trust and not be afraid, because we have hoped in thy holy name. We thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for all our spiritual privileges, and for all our national mercies. May thy fear and the knowledge of thy blessed word be the stability of our times and the glory of our land. And may peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, be established among us for all generations. May we all, who are now before thee, be prepared by a life of prayer for an eternity of praise. May we seek thy face, and call upon thy name, and obtain thy blessing, before the acceptable time of the Lord shall have passed away for ever. May we be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make our requests known unto thee. And according to thy gracious promise, may thy peace, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. To him, with thyself, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, be praise, and dominion, and glory, for ever and ever.

LECTURE VII.

THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL, AND THE CHILDREN CATECHISED.

YE hearts with youthful vigour warm,
In smiling crowds draw near,
And turn from every mortal charm,
A Saviour's voice to hear.

He, Lord of all the worlds on high,
Stoops to converse with you ;
And lays his radiant glories by,
Your friendship to pursue ;

"The soul that longs to see my face
Is sure my love to gain :
And those that early seek my grace
Shall never seek in vain."

What object, Lord, my soul should move,
If once compared with thee ?
What beauty should command my love,
Like what in Christ I see ?

Away, ye false, delusive toys,
Vain tempters of the mind ;
'Tis here I fix my lasting choice,
And here true bliss I find.

PROVERBS XXII. 6.

TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO ; AND WHEN HE IS OLD HE
WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT.

THE reception of our pilgrims in the house Beautiful, and the manner in which the children were catechised there by Prudence, will form the subject

of the present lecture. All true pilgrims to the Celestial City feel the immense importance of having the steps of their children directed in the way everlasting. They obey the command that is addressed to them in the verse that has just been read ; and they are encouraged by the gracious promise which it holds out, that their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. The expression, *training up a child*, naturally leads our thoughts to the bending of the branch, which, while it is yet tender, is easily made to climb up against the wall in any direction we choose. Thus, with God's blessing on early instruction, while the heart is yet tender it receives a heavenward direction ; which more grace and more time render firm and strong, yea, steadfast and unmovable. In this manner the expression is true :

“'Tis education forms the youthful mind ;
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined.”

But there is another important idea suggested by the word in the original. You will find in the margin of many Bibles that it may be rendered also, “Catechise a child in the way he should go.” One of the best modes of training is to do it by catechising.

I. We have to consider the reception of our pilgrims at the house Beautiful. When their wise conductor had departed from them, the porter questioned them in the usual manner. The announcement of Christiana's arrival at that house, with her family, caused unspeakable joy to all who dwelt there. The whole party was immediately admitted, with every expression of the kindest welcome. All their wants were well supplied. Supper being ended, they had family prayer and a psalm ; and now after their weary journey up the hill, and

the alarm they had experienced during the fight they had witnessed, it was unspeakably pleasant for them to be ushered into the chamber that is called Peace, and there to rest their weary limbs. Just as they began to delight themselves here, they were deeply affected with the sound of music which they heard at a distance. It was the voice of the inmates of the house, rejoicing at the arrival of the new comers. They all exclaimed, "Wonderful ! music in the house, music in the heart, and music in heaven, for joy that we are here." While reposing in this chamber, one of the pilgrims had a pleasant dream, which comforted her much, and which she related in the morning. "I thought," she said, "that I sat alone in a solitary place, and was bemoaning the hardness of my heart. Many came about me, and when they heard the cause of my distress, some of them laughed, some called me a fool, and some began to thrust me about. But a glorious person came up to me and said, 'What aileth thee?' When he heard my complaint, he said, 'Peace be to thee;' he also wiped my eyes, and clad me in raiment of silver and gold. Then he took me by the hand, and brought me to the King's palace, and said, 'Welcome, daughter!' The place looked bright and twinkling like the stars, or rather like the sun. I got a sight of Christian there, and I awoke in a joyful frame." This was the substance of Mercy's dream.

From the little which the pilgrims had already seen of the inmates of this house, they were all quite disposed to abide with them. There was something in the very countenance of Prudence, Piety and Charity, which had won their love. They resolved that should they be invited to remain here for any time, they would gladly accept the invita-

tion. This invitation failed not to be given in the morning. Prudence and Piety preferred the request, and said, "If you will be persuaded to stay here a while, you shall have what the house will afford." Charity most heartily seconded the invitation. But little persuasion is requisite to make us accept what we have before been hoping to receive. So they consented, and stayed there a month or more and became very profitable one to another.

We have before remarked, that this house Beautiful is the emblem of the visible Church of Christ; that is, a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is proclaimed, and the sacraments which Christ has ordained are duly administered. It is sweet and pleasant and full of unspeakable comfort, and has much profit every way, when true penitents gain admittance into the household of faith. If you are really in earnest about your salvation, and have fled by faith, as a poor sinner, to the only Saviour of sinners, how can you scruple to cast in your lot among the professed friends and followers of the Saviour? Remember, if you are ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified upon earth, he will be ashamed of you in his eternal and glorious kingdom. Why, if you love him in sincerity, do you rob him of the glory which you might bring to his great name, by a consistent and firm profession of your attachment to him? Why do you wrong your soul of the comfort and profit and instruction which are to be found in the communion of saints? Why do you weaken the hands of the Lord's people by standing aloof from them, if your heart is with them? Oh, how glad is every true minister of the gospel to open the door, and to welcome the arrival of all new comers, who come in truth and sincerity to

confess the faith of Christ crucified ! We have no greater joy than to see any of our fellow-sinners overcoming their scruples and prejudices and hinderances, and making a public profession of attachment to Christ and his people, in the manner which he himself has appointed ; I mean, by coming with a penitent heart and lively faith to the supper of the Lord. But there are some whom we should especially welcome, and for whom we have been as it were on the look-out. Real Christians have often thoughtless and unconverted friends, that linger behind in the City of Destruction after they themselves have fled from it. When we behold such as these come knocking at the door, and seeking admission among the disciples of Christ, this is a sight that cheers us exceedingly, and whenever we witness it we know not how to refrain our joy : and all our people partake of our joy. Oh, my brethren, there is nothing but joy on every side when true penitents are brought to the true fold. The good Shepherd rejoices, and the restored wanderer rejoices. Saints below and angels above all rejoice over returning penitents. Wonderful indeed it is, that worthless sinners pardoned, and having found peace with God, should occasion all this joy. Have we, dear friends, ever occasioned such a sensation ? Oh, fly to Christ for peace with God, and then come and unite yourself with the people of God ; and there will be music in the house, music in the heart, and music also in heaven, for joy that you are here.

One special benefit to be expected from intercourse with the Lord's people, and a due attendance upon the ordinances which he has appointed, is, an humble sense of our pardon and acceptance, notwithstanding the remaining and lamented hardness of our hearts.

This, dear brethren, above every thing is the grief and burden of them that are true of heart; and in nothing are real penitents more clearly to be distinguished from the rest of the world than by this mark. They feel and bemoan the hardness of their hearts. They have done with that arrogancy, that self-sufficiency and self-complacency, that self-justification and self-satisfaction, which invariably reign in all the unconverted. They are men of another spirit. They go softly all their days. Nothing surprises them so much as that they should be so little affected at the sight and sense of all their sins. They are taught by the Holy Spirit to see the sin of unbelief, and their slowness of heart to believe; and the inadequate manner in which they are affected for their sins is a continual burden to them. Lovers of vanity and all light-hearted triflers cannot understand this secret cause of the penitent's sorrow. They wonder what is the matter with him; and are often disposed to laugh at his fears. But the penitent brings this burden before the Lord. He spreads it before the merciful and compassionate Saviour of sinners. And oh, what different treatment, what tender sympathy does he there find! Christ by his Holy Spirit sometimes draws very near to him, and shows him that the sin which he bewails and resists is not laid to his charge, according to the terms of the new covenant. The Comforter, whose special office it is to glorify the Saviour, shows the believer that he is accepted in the Beloved, and complete in him. Then is the poor penitent exceedingly glad. His tears are wiped away. He puts off his sackcloth and is girded with gladness; and he begins to sing in the joy of his heart—

“ Lord, I believe thou hast prepared,
Unworthy though I be,
For me a blood-bought free reward,
A golden harp for *me*.”

Oh, let all our communicants study to adorn their Christian profession! Dear brethren, it is to you we look, and it is to you the world looks, to show the difference between an empty name and vital godliness. You are professedly the inmates of the house Beautiful. Show, then, the beauty of holiness and the attraction of consistency in all your walk and conversation. Show the reality of what is signified by the names of those who dwelt continually in that fair habitation. Humble-mind came to the door to let in the pilgrims. Prudence ran to give them the welcome. Piety wept for joy because they were come: and Charity stretched out her hands to give them the best that the house could afford. Act you, my brethren, in such a way as this, and we shall soon have to rejoice over numbers being added to the Church of such as shall be saved. Put on, as the elect of God, humbleness of mind, and think no office too mean to promote the good of others. As prudent people, look well to your goings, and always invite, but never repel, the inquirers about you. Let true piety reign within your heart, and show that it is there, by the deep interest you take in the spiritual welfare of others. Let all your things be done with charity; and do what in you lies to diffuse among others the precious benefits which you yourself have found by waiting upon God in his house of prayer.

II. We pass on now to consider the manner in which the children were catechised by Prudence in

the Beautiful house. Because Prudence would see how Christiana had brought up her children, she asked leave of her to catechise them; and this was readily obtained. So beginning with the youngest child, Prudence called him to her side, and said, "Can you tell me, dear boy, who made you?" To this the child replied, "God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost." Prudence approved this answer well. Creation is expressly assigned in the Bible to each Person in the ever-blessed and glorious Trinity. Generally, indeed, creation is assigned to the eternal Father. "Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?" But then of the everlasting Son of the Father it is expressly declared: "All things were created by him and for him." So also of the eternal Spirit it is asserted: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Prudence proceeded with her next question: "Can you tell me who saved you?" To this the child replied as before, "God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost." For this answer he was also commended. The love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the power of the Holy Ghost all combine in the work of redemption; and our salvation can only be traced to this divine and glorious source.

"Blest be the wisdom and the power,
The justice and the grace,
That joined in council to restore
And save our ruined race."

Then were the following questions proposed one after the other: "How does God the Father save you? How does God the Son save you? How does God the Holy Ghost save you?" And to these all-important questions a distinct answer was returned in

succession. "God the Father saves me by his grace; God the Son saves me by his righteousness and his blood, by his death and his life; and God the Holy Ghost saves me by his shining light, his renewing power, and his preserving care." Prudence was not only satisfied, she was highly delighted with these answers; and, turning to Christiana, she said, "You are greatly to be commended for thus bringing up your children."

Then did she begin another set of questions with the next youngest, and said to him, "What is man?" To this he replied, "A reasonable creature, so made by God." Next she asked, "What is supposed respecting the state of man, by the word *saved* being applied to him?" To this the boy answered, "That man by sin has brought himself into a state of captivity and misery." Then followed the question, "What is supposed by his being saved by God?" Very excellent was the answer to this: "Sin is so great and mighty a tyrant, that none can pull us out of its dreadful grasp but God; and God is so good and loving unto man as indeed to pull him out of this miserable state." Then did she inquire, "What is God's design in saving man?" and received for answer, "His own glory, and the happiness of his creature." Prudence knew better than to weary the mind, or burden the memory of a child, with asking too many questions at a time, and therefore she concluded her questions to this child by asking once more, "Who are they that shall be saved?" To this the simple and the true answer was given, "Those that accept of his salvation." All these answers were entirely approved by the wise examiner; and she commended the boy by saying, "Your mother has taught you well, and you have hearkened well to what she has said to you."

Then did Prudence begin to question the eldest but one, and she commenced by asking him, "What is heaven?" She was told, "A place and state most blessed, because God dwelleth there." Then did she ask, "And what is hell?" To this the boy replied, "A place and state most woful, because it is the dwelling-place of sin, the devil and death." "Why, then," she asked, "would you go to heaven?" These solid reasons were given in reply: "That I may see God, and serve him without weariness; that I may be with him and love him everlastingly; that I may have the fulness of the Holy Spirit in me." What could Prudence do but commend such an answer as this? And now having begun with the youngest, she went thoroughly through with her task, and concluded with the eldest. Addressing herself to him, she asked, "If there was ever any thing had a being before God?" This was the answer: "No, for God is eternal; nor is there any thing excepting himself that had a being until the beginning of the first day; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth." Seeing he had referred to that book which is the source of all true wisdom, the question was next put, "What do you think of the Bible?" "It is the holy word of God." "Is there nothing there which you cannot understand?" "Yes, a great deal." "What then do you do with such places?" "I think God is wiser than I am: moreover I pray that he will be pleased to let me know all that he knows will be for my good." Then was the concluding question put, "How do you believe as touching the resurrection of the dead?" "I believe," was the answer, "that all men shall rise the same in nature though not in corruption. And I believe this upon a double account: first, because God has promised it; secondly, because he is

able to perform." Then did Prudence highly commend them all, and encourage them still to go on increasing in knowledge. For this end she required them still to hearken to their mother, to take notice of what they should see and hear, and especially to give heed to that book which was the cause of their father becoming a pilgrim. At the same time she added, "I for my part will teach you what I can while you are here, and shall be glad if you will ask me questions that tend to godly edifying."

How important, dear brethren, is both the manner and the matter of this instruction!

1. As to the manner. What a happy specimen we have here of the very important, but much neglected, duty of catechising! Unless this be attended to, much of the minister's labours, both in public preaching and private instruction, will be very imperfectly understood. Where this is neglected, any revival of true religion that takes place is very likely to die with the generation that witnessed it. For want of being thoroughly imbued in early life with the great principles of the gospel, numbers cannot enter into a high tone of piety; neither can they follow, with the profit which they otherwise might, the sermons and other teaching which they hear. They are apt to mistake excitement for devotion; and thus they are driven about and tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; and it is to be feared, in many instances, they are ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. This would have been different had a good foundation been laid in early life. Had they been catechised in childhood in the way they should go, when they were old they would not have departed from it.

Do we know the God of salvation, as he has

revealed himself to us in his holy word? Do we say to the Most High, "Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies?" Do we know what it is to attribute all our salvation to the same divine and blessed source? Have we welcomed the free and the sovereign grace of the Father of mercies, abounding to poor helpless sinners in the Son of his love? Have we fled as such to the everlasting Son of the Father, to be clothed in his righteousness, washed in his blood, delivered by his death, and saved by his life? Are we daily seeking to God the Holy Ghost, to be enlightened by his teaching, renewed by his power, and preserved by his care? Again, Do we know our true position in the world? Do we know that we are not only reasonable, but ruined creatures; that we have destroyed ourselves, and that we are brought by sin into a state of fearful captivity and bondage? And do we rejoice to know that salvation is provided for such sinners, and that all the matchless perfections of God are signally glorified in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ? Do we humbly trust that this great salvation is really ours, because we have thankfully accepted of it? Again, Have we seriously considered the amazing difference between spending a never-ending eternity in a world of glory and a place of torment? Are we looking for and hastening unto the holy place, that we may serve our God without distraction, that we may see him whom we love, and that we may obtain perfect and entire deliverance from sin? Finally, Do we know how to submit with child-like submission to the word of God? Do we acknowledge, when we meet with difficulties, that God is wiser than we are; and humbly pray

that he would guide us unto all needful truth? And, whatever is there revealed, do we rest assured, seem it never so hard or never so strange, in its certain accomplishment; first, because God has promised it; and, secondly, because he is able to perform it? Happy are the people who are so instructed themselves, and are so instructing their children. They are the blessed of the Lord, and their children with them.

HYMN.

How shall the young secure their hearts,
And guard their lives from sin?
Thy word the choicest rules imparts
To keep the conscience clean.

When once it enters to the mind,
It spreads such light abroad,
The meanest souls instruction find,
And raise their thoughts to God.

'Tis like the sun, a heavenly light,
That guides us all the day;
And through the dangers of the night
A lamp to lead our way.

Thy precepts make me truly wise;
I hate the sinner's road:
I hate my own vain thoughts that rise,
But love thy law, my God.

Thy word is everlasting truth;
How pure is every page!
That holy book shall guide our youth,
And well support our age.

PRAYER.

BLESSED Lord, who has taught us in thy holy word that the hill of Zion is a fair place and the joy of the whole earth, send thy gracious Spirit into our hearts, and grant that as we have heard so we may see in the city of our God. May we know the blessedness of those whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee. Oh, grant that we may be brought nigh unto thee by the blood of the cross; and have access to thy gracious presence through the Holy Ghost. May we be no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. May we never be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified; and may we confess it in the way which thou hast appointed in thy holy word. Lord, we would have thy people for our people, and all our delight in the saints that are upon earth, and such as excel in virtue. Give, we beseech thee, a larger and a richer experience of the comfort and joy of the communion of saints. Assure us that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people, and are also heirs through hope of thy everlasting kingdom. May we put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, and charity; forbearing, and forgiving, and loving one another, even as Christ also has done to us. We would offer up at this time also our united supplications on behalf of all the dear children whom thou hast given us, and for the generation that is rising up around us. May all our children be taught of thee. Pour thy blessing upon our seed, and thy Spirit upon our offspring. May they be a seed to serve thee. Teach us how to bring them up in thy faith and fear, thy nurture and admonition. May they know the God of their fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind. May they remember their Creator, their Redeemer, their Sanctifier, now in the days of their youth. Oh, grant that they may know the boundless love of God the Father; that they may be personally interested in the redeeming work of God the Son; and that they may partake of all the rich and sanctifying influence of God the Holy Ghost. All this we ask in the name and mediation of Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour.

LECTURE VIII.

THE SNARE AVOIDED, AND SIN FOUND OUT.

SIN has a thousand treacherous arts,
To practise on the mind ;
With flattering looks she tempts our hearts,
But leaves a sting behind.

With names of virtue she deceives
The aged and the young ;
And, while the heedless wretch believes,
She makes his fetters strong.

She pleads for all the joys she brings,
And gives a fair pretence ;
But cheats the soul of heavenly things,
And chains it down to sense.

NUMBERS XXXII. 23.

BE SURE YOUR SIN WILL FIND YOU OUT.

IN what a great variety of ways may we apply this remarkable expression ! It was originally addressed to those who received their inheritance in that part of the land of Canaan which was conquered in the time of Moses, before Jordan was crossed, and before the main part of the tribes had received any inheritance. Those who obtained a possession on the east side of the river solemnly promised that they would not forsake their brethren. They engaged to go armed over Jordan, and that they would not

return to enjoy their possessions until the rest of their brethren had obtained inheritances as well as they. Moses assured them, that if they religiously kept this promise, they would be guiltless. At the same time, he warned them of the certain consequences of an opposite behaviour. "If ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord : and be sure your sin will find you out." We may all, my brethren, be certain that soon or late we shall be overtaken with the consequences of our sins whenever we transgress. This will abundantly appear from the second branch of our present subject ; and indeed, if any fall into the fatal snare which one of our pilgrims here avoided, we may say to all such by the word of the Lord : "Behold, ye have sinned against the Lord : and be sure your sin will find you out."

I. We have to consider first, how a true pilgrim acted when tempted to be unequally yoked together with an unbeliever, and

II. The painful effects which resulted to one of the party, for an offence which had been formerly committed.

I. We begin with the temptation of a true pilgrim. While the party remained in the Beautiful house, an individual at that time upon a visit there professed attachment to Mercy. He was a person of good breeding, and pretended to religion ; but withal, a man that stuck very close to the world. It was not the Christian character or consistent conduct of our young pilgrim that won the regard of this person. His affection, such as it was, had no deeper root than admiration of a fair countenance, and ap-

proval of industrious habits. Mercy would not trust her own judgment in this most important matter. She did not take for granted that the man was certainly possessed of personal religion because she had met him among religious people. She did not argue, as numbers do, that to be well inclined to religion was sufficient,—that her influence would be able to mould the person to whom she should be united into any form that she pleased. As a traveller to the Celestial City, before she would allow her affections to rest upon the person who professed attachment to her, she must first be satisfied that he is indeed a fellow-traveller to the same place. She knew well that her own heart was not an impartial judge. Vanity, outward appearance, fair show, or a thousand other deceiving causes, might blind her eyes and warp her judgment. She therefore determined to reveal this business to the maidens of the house. Remember who they were that dwelt there—Prudence, Piety and Charity. They were sure to give the most excellent counsel, and their advice with the greatest safety might be followed. Mercy inquired of these concerning the person who had made proposals to her, for they knew him far better than she did. The testimony they gave was by no means favourable. They said he was a very busy young man, and one that pretended to religion; but was, as they feared, a stranger to its power. This was sufficient for Mercy. She was not like those who ask for advice when they have already made up their mind, and who only follow it when it accords with their secret determination. “Nay, then,” she said, “I will look no more on him, for I purpose never to have a clog to my soul.” But Prudence suggested that there was no need for any thing to be done has-

tilly or abruptly. She was confident, she said, if Mercy continued to do as she had begun, boldly avowing her real sentiments, and consistently walking by them, she was confident, that in this case the pretended attachment of this inconsistent professor would fall away and come to nothing. So the event proved. When this young person clearly evinced that she had set out in earnest to seek a city; and that her chief care and all her diligence were employed in avoiding the snares and temptations, the vanities and follies, that would impede her progress; and to abound in those works which are performed by those who pass through this world without being of the world; then did this pretender's affection for Mercy cool. He forebore to come to her again; and not satisfied with that, he even raised an evil report concerning her. Thus the prediction of Prudence was fulfilled, and Mercy was delivered out of the snare in which so many are taken. She told Prudence, her own sister Bountiful had been greatly tried by an unsuitable match. That loving sister of Mercy had been united to a person of a churlish disposition. But they could never agree. Bountiful was for acting out the generous impulse of her nature. But this so displeased her husband, that at length he had turned her out of doors. And yet the man who had acted in such a way as this was a professor of religion, such a professor as the world is full of now-a-days. "But," said Mercy, in the spirit of a true pilgrim, "I am for none of all these."

Here, my brethren, let us pause for a few moments to receive instruction. It is deeply to be regretted that many young people, who profess to be followers and servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, by no means ponder so thoughtfully as they ought, the

plain duty and the immense importance of marrying in the Lord only. A pleasing appearance, the possession of wealth, a decent exterior or outward regard to the forms of religion, is considered by many as amply sufficient to constitute a suitable companion for life. Thus young people give their affections to those whom they have no reason to believe are possessed of the root of the matter; and by doing this, they pierce themselves through with many sorrows. Dear young friends, have you really experienced the great change yourselves? Are you indeed not of the world, even as He whom you profess to serve is not of the world? Have you felt your sins, and fled to your Saviour? and are you really living like a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth, whose main concern is to reach in safety your heavenly home at the last? How, then, dare you become united for life with one who is travelling in another direction? How dare you violate the commandment of God, which speaks to you: "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers?" Oh! be persuaded that this is not a step to be enterprised or taken in hand unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God. Keep your affections as it were with a bridle, until you have good ground to believe that they are about to rest upon a proper object. Do not entertain the foolish notion, that your influence will be such that you can turn the heart of one you love whichever way you please. It is a divine not a human work to change the heart. Bountiful probably thought, at the first, she would be able to infuse a different spirit into her husband; but how wofully was she disappointed! She could not make the churl bountiful. We tempt God to plague us in the most signal

manner, if we go out of the path of duty, in the vain idea of doing what he only by his Almighty Spirit can do. Imitate, therefore, in matters of this kind, the part acted by Mercy. Lean not to your own understanding. Do not trust your own heart. Reveal the business to those who are best able to give you counsel and advice. Is there no prudent person among your friends, whose judgment you take to be better than your own? Is there none whose real piety would be sure to warn you from taking a sinful or improper step? Is there none whose genuine charity would dissuade you from any unnecessary severity either to yourself or to those about whom you are interested? Consult such as these; and follow up the advice which they give. If attention be paid to you by any of whose religion you stand in doubt, this is the manner in which prudence and piety and charity, with one voice, advise you to act. Keep your affections in your own hands until your doubts are cleared up. In the mean time, do not compromise or conceal your Christian principles. Declare plainly whose you are and whom you serve. Show that you have in deed and in truth renounced the sins and follies, the vanities and pleasures of the world, and that you are a disciple of Him who was crucified. Show that your main concern is to live godly in Christ Jesus, and so to pass through things temporal as not to lose the things that are eternal. Do this, and your way will be made plain. Most likely, those who are evidently of the world will withdraw from you, and will be frightened by what they will consider so much religion. But if it be otherwise, and such as are unacquainted with the power of vital godliness are ready to promise that they will tolerate your religion for

your sake ; if you really know what true conversion means yourself, you will not dare to take such a step. You will say : I never purpose to have a clog to my soul. Should you venture upon such a step, you will smart for it. "Behold, you have sinned against the Lord : and be sure your sin will find you out." If, by a miracle of mercy, after such a wilful sin you yourself shall escape, you will be saved so as by fire. Every step on your way to heaven will be hindered and impeded ; and the clog which you have deliberately and by your own choice bound to yourself, will harass and distress you to the very end of your pilgrimage. But, it is far more likely that this clog will prove your ruin, and draw you to destruction. When the sons of God (the professed people and worshippers of God) took them wives of all which they chose, what universal apostasy resulted from it ! It is a thousand times more likely for a professor of godliness who takes a worldly partner to be seduced by that partner into worldly ways, than that the professor will win over the other. Ponder this well in your hearts. Have you not plenty of hinderances within you and around you, without attaching another of a most formidable kind fast to your side ?

There is one case in which this matter is presented to us in a somewhat different light. If persons were united in marriage when both were ignorant of the power of true religion, and it pleases God to visit by his grace either one or the other, the one who is first made to differ, whether it be the husband or the wife, will indeed have a difficult part to act. If you have lived for some time with a husband or wife, both of you alike ignorant of true religion, and you yourself have been brought out of darkness

into marvellous light, while your partner remains still the same ; truly this is an affliction, and you must bear it. There is, however, far more hope that your partner will eventually be brought to see things in a different light, than there would have been, had you, with your present views, transgressed the command which says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." In the time of your ignorance you did not sin wilfully and deliberately with your eyes open. The same grace which has been extended to you may eventually be extended to your partner also. Act consistently, and walk uprightly. Study to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. If any obey not the word, they may without the word be won by the consistent conversation of a believing husband or wife. Be not discouraged ; but continue to hope, and wait and pray and use the means. "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband ; or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

II. We proceed now to the second part of our subject. This was to consider the painful effects which resulted from an offence formerly committed. As the pilgrims still abode in the house Beautiful, Matthew, the eldest son of Christiana, fell sick. His sickness was so sore that all his friends were much concerned on his account. There dwelt not far from the house one Dr. Skill, an aged and eminent physician. At Christiana's desire this physician was sent for, and he soon arrived. When he had a little observed the symptoms of the boy, he inquired of his mother, upon what diet he had lately fed. Christiana assured him that he had taken nothing but

what was wholesome. But the physician shook his head, and declared, "The boy has been tampering with something that lies within him undigested, and it will not go from him without the use of means. It is necessary for him to be purged, or else he will die." The serious declaration of the doctor awakened the recollection of Samuel, the brother of him that was sick. "Mother," he said, "what was that which my brother gathered and ate as soon as we came from the gate that is at the head of this way? You know," he continued, "there was an orchard on the left hand, and some of the trees hung over the wall, and Matthew plucked and ate of them." This circumstance Christiana well remembered; and it left the doctor no longer in the least doubt as to the cause and nature of his young patient's complaint. "I was certain," he said, "that he had eaten something that was not wholesome food. That which he has eaten is the most unwholesome fruit of all. It is the fruit of the enemy's orchard. I do marvel that none did warn you of it. Many have died thereof." Then did Christiana bitterly bewail both her own carelessness and her son's waywardness. But the physician begged her not to be too dejected, as he trusted the boy would do well by taking the medicines and using the prescription he would write out. With all the earnestness of a mother, Christiana besought him to try the utmost of his skill for the recovery of her son, whatever it might cost. The first medicine which he mixed up had not the desired effect. It was made of the blood of a goat, the ashes of a heifer, with some of the juice of hyssop and other bitter herbs. But this proving ineffectual, the doctor wrote out a regular prescription. According to the custom of physicians, this

prescription was written in Latin. It began, *Ex carne et sanguine Christi*, &c., from the principal ingredients of which it consisted, that is to say, the body and blood of Christ. This, rightly applied, is a sovereign remedy for every disease, and every complaint to which pilgrims both small and great are ever subject. Very minute were the directions of the doctor for right application of this precious medicine in the present instance. It was to be taken thrice, and fasting, and in half a quarter of a pint of tears of repentance. When this was prepared and brought to the sick boy, he was very loth to take it, although sorely pained and oppressed by his sickness. Both the physician and his mother had to use all their persuasion and all their authority to induce him to take it. But at length, after much resistance, and many excuses had been urged against his taking it, he did take it in the end; and very kindly it wrought with him. His pain abated, and symptoms of amendment soon became apparent. In a short time he was able to walk about the house; while Prudence, Piety and Charity all came to talk to him about his complaint and the manner of his recovery. Great was the thankfulness of Christiana for the effectual cure which her son had received. When she asked the physician what she was indebted to him for the pains and care he had taken; she received for answer, "You must pay the Master of the College of Physicians, according to the rules made and provided in such a case." She asked then if this medicine were serviceable for any other complaints, except that to which it had just been so happily applied. To this the physician replied, "It is a universal remedy. It is good for all the diseases to which pilgrims are incident; and when it is well prepared,

it will keep good time out of mind." Upon hearing this, Christiana ordered a large quantity to be prepared for herself and family, and declared that as long as she could get this, she would never seek for other medicine to heal their sicknesses. But this was only half of its virtue. The physician informed her it was good to prevent diseases as well as to cure them. "Yea," he added, "I will venture to say, and will stand to it, that if a man will but use this medicine as he should, it will make him live for ever." But he was very particular in giving this caution: "It must be used in no other way, but in the way I have prescribed, or else it will do no good." So he gave them all a supply of the medicine, and especially charged his recovered patient to beware of forbidden fruit; and then he took leave of them all, and went his way.

All this, dear brethren, is full of the most important instruction. Let us try for a little while to gather it up, and to apply it for our individual use and benefit. This youth was not sick immediately after he had taken the forbidden fruit. At first he suffered little or no inconvenience from what he had done; but how grievously did he suffer in the end! And thus, my brethren, for the most part, it is with sin. While conscience was slumbering, or only speaking in such a gentle voice that you would not hear, you ventured to transgress. Conscience still slumbered, and, without any thorough abasement for what you had done, you went on your way; and because sentence against your evil deed was not executed speedily, you said in your heart, "There shall no harm happen unto me!" But this is the vainest of all vain expectations. Soon or late you are certain to be overtaken with the consequences

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of what you have done. "Be sure your sin will find you out." A time is coming when you are certain to discover what an evil and bitter thing it is. At the last it will sting like an adder and bite like a serpent. If you are not left to sleep the sleep of death, and to find your fearful condition in the world to come, on some particular occasion conscience will awake, the remembrance of unpardoned sin will revive, and you will tremble under an apprehension of the wrath of God which impends over you. How ought a skilful physician, an able minister of the New Testament, to act, when he comes to visit those whose conscience by sin is accused? He must not heal before he probes. He must not be satisfied with a slight cure; and he must be greatly afraid of saying, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace. If he be not one of the physicians of no value, he will search into the particular cause of the sinner's uneasiness. He will try to bring the particular and besetting sin home to the memory, to the heart and conscience of the offender. He will show that it is in vain to expect the favour of God, or the joy of his salvation, so long as any one sin remains confessed, unforsaken and unpardoned. He will not palliate or make excuse for any sin. On the other hand, the particular sin which has been committed he will faithfully set forth, in all its odious colours, and all its terrible consequences. But why will he do this? To drive the poor sinner to despair, and to make him say his sins are too great to be forgiven? No, my brethren, widely different is the object which the minister of the gospel has in view. He does, indeed, wish to make the sinner despair of himself and his own resources, but this is only to prepare him for that remedy which can effectually heal and

restore him, and save his soul alive. He begins with the general promises of God in the gospel to all returning sinners ; he points to Christ the Lamb of God, and tells of the great sacrifice which he offered on the cross, once for all ; and he assures the sorrowful soul, if this precious sacrifice be only applied by true faith to the penitent heart, that iniquity is purged and sin is pardoned. If rest and peace cannot be restored by this means, the faithful minister knows well that there is no other remedy or sacrifice for sin ; and therefore he still, with all his power, and with all the earnestness that he can command, continues to prescribe an individual appropriation of Christ to the sinner's heart. More clearly and distinctly than ever, he testifies of that Saviour who himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree ; he points to that atoning blood which was shed for the remission of sins. And this is the direction he gives to the troubled soul : "Apply to yourself, by faith, that atoning blood ; rely upon that precious sacrifice ; and all the divine and glorious efficacy which it contains is certainly yours, to pardon and to heal your soul for ever." Whatever, my brethren, may have been your transgressions, it shall surely be well with you for ever, if you only apply to yourselves individually, in the appointed manner, the great sacrifice which was offered for the sins of the whole world. Forms and rites and shadows cannot heal your sin-sick souls.

"No outward form can cleanse from sin ;
The leprosy lies deep within :
The precious blood of Christ alone
Has power sufficient to atone."

But how is this precious blood to be appropriated to the sinner, so that he may have all the benefit

that results from it? It is applied by faith. Nothing but faith can apply it. Humble your soul. Again and again renew your application to Him who alone can save you from death. Look unto Him whom your sins have pierced; and be afflicted, and mourn and weep at the remembrance of all that you have done. This process is grievous to flesh and blood. The natural pride and stoutness and unbelief of our hearts make us very unwilling to submit to this method of regaining peace, and recovering spiritual health. We would rather be excused. We would submit to any thing sooner than this. We have to be persuaded, and entreated, and besought in the most earnest manner, to do what is absolutely necessary for our present peace and eternal good. Oh that I could persuade every individual here present to apply this precious balm for the healing of their spiritual maladies! Believe me, brethren, what Christ has done and suffered for sinners is amply sufficient to heal and to save you for ever. In his undertaking there is a virtue goes forth to heal the most desperate diseases, and to cure the most hopeless cases. It is

“A sovereign balm for every wound.”

Be sure, however, that you apply to Christ in the appointed manner, or else the means of everlasting life to his people will be to you a source of eternal death. To apply to Christ in the appointed manner, is to be really penitent for sin; entirely to depend upon him for pardon and acceptance; and to show by our life and conduct that we are indeed saved from our sins. May the eternal Spirit enable us, one and all, thus to apply to Christ, and to believe on him to the saving of the soul. So shall you find in

Christ all that you need. If you apply to him, he will heal you of all the diseases to which you are subject; he will keep you from all the evils of which you are afraid. Yea,—and this we declare to you by the word of the Lord,—if you truly believe on him, you shall live for ever! “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.”

HYMN.

ART thou a pilgrim on thy way
To regions of eternal day?
Oh, form not then the tie most dear,
With those whose wishes centre here.

Within, on every side, around,
Temptations in thy path abound;
How canst thou reach the heavenly goal,
If earthly fetters clog thy soul?

Did not the sons of God behold
Seductive smiles in days of old?
They took them wives, each whom he chose,
And soon the swelling waters rose.

Think of the Nazarite of Dan,
How sad the painful course he ran!
Philistia's daughters quenched his sight,
And turned to weakness all his might!

And was not Israel's king the same,
With all his wisdom, all his fame?
Though all the world he far surpassed,
Him heathen wives seduced at last.

Lord, let my heart be fixed on thee,
And in thy saints my pleasure be;
Here let me form the ties of love,
To perfect in thy courts above.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who of thy tender love hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin and also an ensample of godly life; give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life. Oh, grant that we may be thy children by adoption and grace. And as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, may we come out and be separated from a world that lieth in wickedness. May we be companions of them that fear thee. Keep us, we beseech thee, from every snare to which we are exposed. Thou hast promised that if we acknowledge thee in all our ways, thou wilt direct our path. Lord, direct us at every step. Make thy way plain before us. Let all our comforts and mercies, and every relative state of life, be sanctified to us. May we be joined only to such as are joined to the Lord, and be united in the closest ties to such as will do us good and not evil, all the days of our life. Keep us, we beseech thee, from all sin and wickedness. However tempting the forbidden fruit may appear to the eye, oh! may we remember that at last it will sting like an adder and bite like a serpent. Cleanse us from our secret faults. None of our transgressions are hid from thee. Thou hast set our misdeeds before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. Oh, remember not against us former iniquities. Remember not the sins of our youth. And whenever our conscience by sin is accused, and we go mourning all the day, may we call our ways to remembrance, and humble ourselves before thee with true contrition of heart. Give us unfeigned repentance for all the sins and errors of our past life. And, Lord, we pray thee, enable us to apply to our guilty conscience that precious sacrifice which was offered once on the cross, for the sins of the whole world. Lord, grant that we may so eat the flesh of thy dear Son, and drink his blood by faith, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed; save us, and we shall be saved, through his merits who died and rose again, and ever liveth to make intercession for us, Jesus Christ our Saviour.

LECTURE IX.

MYSTERIES EXPOUNDED AND PRAYER ANSWERED.

LORD, what a thoughtless wretch was I,
To mourn, and murmur, and repine,
To see the wicked placed on high,
In pride and robes of honour shine.

But oh! their end, their dreadful end!
Thy sanctuary taught me so:
On slippery rocks I see them stand,
And fiery billows roll below.

Now let them boast how tall they rise,
I'll never envy them again,
There they may stand with haughty eyes,
Till they plunge deep in endless pain.

Their fancied joys, how fast they flee!
Like dreams, as fleeting and as vain;
Their songs of softest harmony
Are but a prelude to their pain.

Now I esteem their mirth and wine,
Too dear to purchase with my blood;
Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine,
My life, my portion, and my God.

PSALM LXXIII. 16, 17.

WHEN I THOUGHT TO KNOW THIS, IT WAS TOO PAINFUL FOR ME, UNTIL I
WENT INTO THE SANCTUARY OF GOD.

THE Psalm from which these words are taken, is a very striking one. It describes a grievous temptation which sorely distressed the inspired author of it; and then it proceeds to inform us of the means

by which he was completely delivered from the snare, when he was almost gone, and his steps had well-nigh slipped. His temptation arose from contrasting the abundant prosperity of many of the ungodly with the grievous and manifold trials of the righteous. Very painful and perplexing were the thoughts that oppressed him as he pursued this contrast. He was almost ready to say: What is the use of all my care to avoid sin; my daily self-denial and habitual endeavours to walk before God and to do what is pleasing in his sight; seeing that he showers down in rich abundance the blessings of his providence upon those who make no effort whatever to please him, but who do even as they lust? He was taught, however, the folly and the wickedness of such a conclusion, when he went into the sanctuary of God. When he mingled among the true worshippers of Israel's God, when the solemn truths contained in the lively oracles of God were expounded to him, and the life of the world to come was vividly presented to him, the light broke in upon him; and he was heartily ashamed and deeply humbled on account of the envious and repining thoughts which he had dared to entertain. "So foolish," he says, "was I, and ignorant, even as it were a beast before thee." We are all, dear brethren, apt to be perplexed and distressed at the Lord's dealing with us and with others: and there are many things that are too hard for us until we go into the sanctuary of God. If we only receive with meekness the declarations of Scripture, and view every thing with a never-ending eternity before us, then light will break in upon us, and our way will be made plain.

The further benefits received by our pilgrims while

they remained in the house Beautiful will form the subject of the present lecture.

I. We have to notice the replies of Prudence to the questions of him who had been sick.

II. The means by which they regained their former conductor.

III. The principal lessons that were taught them before their departure.

I. We begin with the questions of him who had been sick. Prudence had encouraged the children to come to her with any questions they might have to propose. As if awakened to serious consideration by his visitation, the recovered youth inquired, first, Why medicine is bitter to the palate? He was informed, To show how unwelcome the word of God is to the carnal heart. When he inquired how medicine works effectually, he was told, by cleansing the heart and mind. His next inquiry was, the lessons to be learned from the motion of fire, and that of the beams of the sun. The going up of the fire, he was told, may teach us to ascend to heaven by fervent desires; and the coming down of the sweet influence of the sun sets before us the Sun of Righteousness, who, though so highly exalted, reaches down with his grace and love to us below. Next he inquired concerning the clouds, the rainbow and the springs of water. An important lesson he was instructed to draw from each of these. From the clouds, deriving their water from the sea and emptying themselves upon the earth, you may learn that ministers should fetch their doctrine from the boundless source of Truth, and give out what they obtain from thence for the benefit of others. The

rainbow reminds us that the covenant of grace is confirmed and established to us in the Mediator of the new covenant. The springs coming to us through the earth, and some of them rising out of the highest hills, teach us a twofold lesson: first, that grace comes to us through the human nature of Christ; and, secondly, that it sometimes springs up in the noble and mighty as well as the poor and lowly. After this the candle, the pelican, and the crowing of the cock, were all explained by Prudence as most instructive emblems. As you look at the candle, see how the fire fastens upon the wick, and learn that unless grace be kindled in the heart there will be no true light of life within us. See, too, how the candle consumes away by the light which it imparts; and learn how body, soul and spirit should be spent in the service of God. Consider the pelican piercing her breast to nourish her brood with the warm fountain that issues from it; and think of Him who so loveth his people as to save them from death by his blood. As you listen to the crowing of the cock, think of Peter's sin and Peter's tears. Think, too, that it reminds you that the day is at hand, and prepare for the day of judgment,

“That day for which all other days were made.”

Have we, dear brethren, thoroughly learned these all-important lessons? They are all too hard for us; and we shall never effectually learn them, until they are grafted upon our hearts by the Great Teacher. As we become spiritually-minded, and partake of that heavenly wisdom which dwells with prudence, there will be no object, however trivial, which will not direct our thoughts to the most important truths. Let us learn to welcome the bitterest medicine that may be put into our hands by

the good Physician, if only this be the fruit and effect of it, to purge and subdue our iniquities. Nature shrinks from pain, and the carnal heart shrinks from the humiliating doctrines of the gospel; but grace will enable us to receive with thankfulness the bitterest providence that is sanctified to our eternal benefit. Let us pray earnestly to have our affections sanctified, that we may be delivered from the dust of the earth, and aspire continually to high and heavenly things. And let us recollect that the true way to spiritual prosperity is to receive of the healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings." Let us try to be good dispensers of the manifold grace of God. "If the clouds be full of rain they empty themselves upon the earth." So let us endeavour to communicate to others the blessings which we have received. "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." Let us remember that the Son of man is clothed with a rainbow. The covenant of grace stands fast with him, and as believers in him we are preserved unto everlasting salvation. All our blessings flow down to us through him, who allied himself to our nature that he might reconcile God and man, and be the medium of all spiritual blessings to his people. His Spirit is a free spirit, blowing and breathing wherever he will. It is true that not many mighty, not many noble are called. But all things are possible with God, and sometimes the great ones of this world are seen to bow their necks in meek subjection to the yoke of Christ. Oh, let us be willing to spend and be spent in the service of our Master; like candles, expending ourselves to give light unto others. Let us never for-

get the exceeding great love of our only Saviour, who has redeemed us to God by his blood. Let us be deeply humbled to think how often we have imitated the cowardice of Peter. Shall not we weep when we recall our own ways to remembrance? Let us seek also to imitate his genuine repentance.

II. We proceed now to consider the means by which the pilgrims obtained their former conductor. The time when they must leave their present residence was fast approaching. And now one of the children, who remembered well the important services which they had received from their former conductor, inquired if he could not again be obtained. Christiana commended the consideration of the child, and profited by it. She drew up a petition, and required the porter to send it by the hands of a fit person to the Interpreter's house. This was the prayer of the petition: That the same conductor, who had so happily been their guide through a part of the road already past, might again be sent to conduct them to their journey's end. No sooner had this petition been presented than a message was sent back that it should be granted. And, ere long, as the party were making preparations to depart, a knocking was heard at the door, and, lo, Greatheart himself (that was the conductor's name) had arrived to accompany them. His arrival was welcomed with the sincerest satisfaction. He brought with him suitable presents, which his lord had commanded him to bring, and give to each of the pilgrims to serve for their support and refreshment by the way.

Here let us pause to reflect for a moment upon the

excellency of a meek spirit and the efficacy of fervent prayer. One of the children reminded Christiana of the petition which they should send before they set forward. The meekness of Christian wisdom is especially to be seen in a readiness to be directed aright, from whatever quarter the direction may come. A wise man will hear and will increase in learning. He is all eye, all ear. He is ready to receive an important hint from any one, even from a child. Those that are wise in their own conceits, and that are hurrying forward in a way that is not good, are very impatient of control and advice. If it be offered by an inferior, however important or salutary, instead of paying the slightest attention to it, they will perhaps scornfully say, "Dost thou teach us?" But true pilgrims to the Celestial City are people of another spirit. They are too deeply sensible of their own ignorance and forgetfulness, and liability to mistake, to reject without consideration the counsel of any one. "A little child shall lead them." If the counsel be good, if it commend itself to their conscience, and if it be agreeable to the word of God, no matter from what quarter it may come, they will follow it. Oh, how continually do we require stirring up to be more frequent, more fervent and more particular in our prayers! When her little boy reminded her of the request which they should now make to the King, Christiana not only commended him, but with great humility she confessed that she had almost forgotten that very important matter. How many things which would materially promote our growth in grace and our advancement in the heavenly way we have not, because we ask not! How wretchedly prone we are

to forget to pray for what we need, and what is promised in answer to prayer !

For now observe, again, the readiness of God to fulfil the petitions of his people. When Christiana's petition was drawn up and presented, how readily was it granted, and how soon did the blessing arrive ! She obtained an answer with more than electric speed. So, my brethren, it will be, in the end, with every one of you, if you are not asking amiss, when you spread your humble petitions before the throne of the heavenly grace. With regard to ourselves, there is one way never to have our proper petitions denied. Only let us suffer our will to be swallowed up, and conformed in all things to the will of our Father which is in heaven. Let us only love what he commands and desire what he promises. Let his favour, his grace, his presence and blessing, be the sum and substance of all our petitions. If we have only the guidance of our covenant God to preserve and uphold us through every part of our earthly pilgrimage, and the enjoyment of his blissful presence secured to us in his eternal and glorious kingdom, when the wilderness is crossed and the days of our mourning are ended—is not this sufficient ? Never desire, or ask for any temporal enjoyment without this limitation : Lord, deny me this request if it be not to thy glory and to my spiritual and eternal good ! And leave it for Infinite Wisdom to decide in this matter. Should it be according to thy mind, if thy Father, whose wisdom is infinite, and whose tender mercies are over all his works, determines otherwise ? If an earthly father is so foolish as to allow his little children to carve for themselves, when they sit down with him at the table, the consequence is, they cut their fingers ; and it ends in a bitter cry and serious

injury. Your Father is too wise and too good to suffer this. He will deal out to you the portion which he knows to be best for you. Receive it as such, and be thankful. It may sometimes be a severe exercise to your faith, to believe that it is love and mercy which deny your cherished desire. But what you know not now, you shall know hereafter. Believe firmly and walk uprightly, and all your real need shall be supplied by him who only knows what is really best for you. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." You will find it has been so when you come to your journey's end. There you will see that you have been led by a right way to the Celestial City; and then you will acknowledge

"God is alike both good and wise
In what he grants and what denies."

Go therefore on your way, if not always rejoicing, yet hoping and waiting, and trusting and praying. And let this be your song to the God of your salvation, through every part of your pilgrimage:—

"Thy guidance all my journey through
Thou art engaged to grant;
What else I want, or think I do,
'Tis better still to want."

III. We have lastly to consider the parting lessons taught to the pilgrims before they departed from the house Beautiful. These lessons were for their meditation as they proceeded on their way. Before any thing else, they had one of the apples shown to them which came from the forbidden tree in Paradise, and for eating of which our first parents were banished from that happy garden. At the first sight it seemed uncertain to our pilgrims whether this fruit was for

food or poison. But when the matter was fully explained to them in all its effects and consequences, they held up their hands in astonishment. The next wonder which they were shown was Jacob's ladder. They saw what Jacob beheld in his dream when he slept at Bethel. A ladder was set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending upon it; and above it stood the Lord God Almighty, promising mercy, and proclaiming himself as the covenant God of Jacob. Great was the joy and the delight with which the pilgrims gazed upon this pleasant prospect. The children especially were mightily taken with this clear view of earth and heaven brought together, and they begged permission to remain for a while to enjoy the sight. The next mystery which was shown to the party was a golden anchor. But neither Prudence, nor Piety, nor Charity would suffer the pilgrims to be satisfied with merely looking at this. They were to take it to themselves. They were to lay hold upon it, and keep it, and never let it depart from them until they were safely arrived in the Celestial City. Then, indeed, they were assured it would be lost, for they would have no further use for it there. When Christiana had taken this anchor down, her wise instructors said to her, "You shall have it with you, for it is of absolute necessity that you should, that you may lay hold of that within the veil, and stand steadfast in case you should meet with turbulent weather. As soon as they had got it, it seemed as if a new spring of joy was opened in their hearts. They went forward rejoicing in hope. The last scene which our pilgrims were shown before they parted from this fair place, and these excellent instructors, was a very famous mountain.

This was none other than Mount Moriah, upon which Abraham, the father of the faithful, had offered up Isaac, his only son. Here they gazed with mingled reverence and wonder and delight, upon the affecting scene. The evident tokens of Abraham's singular faith and love and obedience were as clearly to be seen as at the first. The altar and the wood, the fire and the knife, there remain for the inspection of pilgrims to this very day. "Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh : as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." As they gazed upon this sight, the pilgrims said one to another, "Oh what a man for love to his Master, and for denial to himself, was Abraham !" And now, all their lessons being finished, that none of them might be lost, and that they might be more easily remembered by the children, Prudence turned into verse the four instructive emblems which had been displayed, and touching her instrument of music, she sang for their edification the following words :—

How fair to Eve the fruit appeared!
Pilgrim ! temptation fly !
On Jacob's ladder, firmly reared,
Pilgrim, ascend on high !
Hold fast thine anchor, hope of heaven ;
But let not this suffice,
Until with Abraham you have given
Your best of sacrifice.

How well, my brethren, do these four important lessons deserve to be remembered by us all ? Let us earnestly seek to have them engraved on the tables of our memory, and to have them really brought home to our hearts by the only effectual Teacher. What can be more important than these essential truths ? Our fall in Adam, our recovery by Christ,

our support by hope amid all the storms and troubles of this present evil world, and the wonderful and constraining power of faith and love, causing us to make any sacrifice, however costly, for his sake in whom we have believed, and whom we supremely love. Have you, dear brethren, been effectually taught these essential truths? We may, indeed, know them by rote, and be able to talk about them; but our hearts will never be affected by them, our lives will never be influenced by them, until they are opened and expounded to us by the Holy Spirit. Seek then earnestly to have the Holy Spirit for your teacher in each of these particulars. He alone can make us thoroughly to apprehend our individual concern in the original transgression of our first parents. He shows us that we are fallen children of fallen parents; that we are conceived and born in sin; and that our innermost nature is depraved and defiled and corrupt. Oh, my brethren, when men are made to feel aright how low they have fallen, and how desperate is their case, they cannot be satisfied with a slight cure. Sin has driven them from paradise and separated between them and God. How can they return and stand with acceptance before Him! But, lo! a remedy is devised, fully adequate to the extent of the case, desperate and sad as it is. This is a plan entirely of the Lord's providing. Himself hath spoken, and also done it. The Son of man is the true Jacob's ladder. He it is who alone unites earth and heaven, and brings sinners to God. His name is Wonderful. By his person and work, his death and resurrection, his ascension and intercession, he has thrown down every barrier which excluded us from God. Being at once both God and man, he can stand upon earth, and reach

up to the highest heaven at the same time. Through him, a new and living way is opened for bringing us to God. Through him the angels of God are employed, continually in ministering to poor sinners that have fled to Christ for refuge. "Are they not ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them which shall be heirs of salvation?" Have you, my brethren, thoughtfully considered this wonderful ladder? Have you ever set one step upon it? I mean, have you fled to Jesus to make reconciliation for your sins, and to bring you to God? Oh, remember that he "is the way, and the truth, and the life, and that no man cometh unto the Father but by him." Again, if you are a true pilgrim to the Celestial City, have you got firmly hold of the golden anchor? If you have made Christ your refuge by faith, it is your privilege to have for your anchor a hope, sure and steadfast. If you go forward without this, you will faint and tire, and give up in despair before you reach your journey's end. You must look for some turbulent weather.

"Life is a sea where storms must rise;
'Tis folly talks of cloudless skies."

How can you ride out the storm without your anchor? Oh! seek to abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. Believe simply and firmly, and then you may hope largely. The promise and the oath of God are the two immutable things pledged for the security of the believer. And for this express purpose, that "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made

an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Finally, go to the Mount Moriah to learn the effects of saving faith, and to feel the constraining power of redeeming love. Can you see Abraham by faith offering up his only son upon the altar? Can you see, as it were, the altar, and the wood, and the fire, and the knife, and not perceive that true faith is not an empty name or a barren profession, but a mighty and a powerful principle, which enables us to obey the most difficult command of God? Or can you think of the love of God in providing a Lamb for himself for a burnt-offering—not sparing his own Son, but freely delivering him up for you—can you think of the love of Christ, in freely offering himself to die an accursed death for your redemption—can you, I say, think of all this love, and not let it have a powerful and constraining influence upon you? What is there that you will withhold from him, who withheld not his Son from you? What sacrifice are you unwilling to make for him who sacrificed himself for you? Lord of all power and might, give unto each of us Abraham's faith, and then we shall be blessed with faithful Abraham. Then we shall have Abraham's love and Abraham's obedience; with him we shall not scruple to bring our best of sacrifice to the God of our salvation. Thy love will kindle ours, and we shall each say, from the bottom of our hearts—

"Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

HYMN.

WHEN overwhelmed with grief,
My heart within me dies,
Helpless and far from all relief,
To heaven I lift mine eyes.

Oh lead me to the rock
That's high above my head,
And make the covert of thy wings
My shelter and my shade.

Within thy presence, Lord,
For ever I'll abide;
Thou art the tower of my defence,
The refuge where I hide.

Thou givest me the lot
Of those that fear thy name;
If endless life be their reward,
I shall possess the same.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and ever-living God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is good for us to draw near unto thee. Send us, we beseech thee, the light of thy Holy Spirit, and make us to understand those things which are too hard for us. May we welcome any trial, however bitter, and embrace every doctrine, however humiliating, that brings us nearer to thee. Sanctify us through thy truth: thy word is truth. Show us thy covenant, and let it stand fast with us, as the faithful witness in the heavens: and may we receive all our mercies as flowing to us through Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant. May the love of Christ constrain us to live not henceforth to ourselves. And do thou graciously look on us, and cause us to weep bitterly at the remembrance and the sense of all our sins. Give us all the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and make us to abound in effectual and fervent prayer. We confess before thee that we are the fallen children of fallen parents. Behold, we were shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mother conceive us. We are by nature corrupt and depraved, and children of wrath even as others. We bless thy holy name that thou hast remembered

us in our low estate. We praise and thank thee that, through Jesus Christ, a communion is again opened and carried on between earth and heaven. Oh may we individually return and come to thee by this new and living way. Having fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope which is set before us, may we have this hope as the anchor of our souls sure and steadfast. And, finally, we beseech thee to grant to us such an affecting view of thine amazing love in sending thy Son to be the propitiation of our sins, and such a sense of the exceeding great love of our Saviour Jesus Christ in dying for us, that we may be constrained to consecrate ourselves, our souls and our bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee. All this we ask in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

LECTURE X.

THE LOWLY VALE, AND THE PLACE OF DARKNESS.

CONSIDER all my sorrows, Lord,
And thy deliverance send;
My soul for thy salvation faints,
When will my troubles end?
Yet I have found 'tis good for me
To bear my Father's rod;
Afflictions make me learn thy law,
And live upon my God.
This is the comfort I enjoy
When new distress begins:
I read thy word, I run thy way,
And hate my former sins.
Had not thy word been my delight
When earthly joys were fled,
My soul, oppressed with sorrow's weight,
Had sunk amongst the dead.
I know thy judgments, Lord, are right,
Though they may seem severe;
The sharpest sufferings I endure
Flow from thy faithful care.
Before I knew thy chastening rod,
My feet were apt to stray;
But now I learn to keep thy word,
Nor wander from thy way.

PSALM LXXI. 20.

THOU, WHICH HAST SHOWED ME GREAT AND SORE TROUBLES, SHALT QUICKEN ME AGAIN, AND SHALT BRING ME UP AGAIN FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH.

THIS verse happily describes the varied experience of the true pilgrim to the Celestial City. In his progress to the place of everlasting rest, he is far from enjoying constant sunshine. His experience

is checkered, and his supplies are as wonderful as those of the children of Israel, when they came up out of the land of Egypt. Their whole history was a continual miracle, from the day of their departure from the house of bondage to the time of their settlement in the land of promise. Not only did the Lord their God bring them out of Egypt with a mighty hand and a stretched out arm, but he led them through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents and scorpions and drought. Where there was no water, he brought them forth water out of the rock of flint, and fed them in the wilderness with manna, which they knew not; and after all their sins and chastisements, the temptations and wonders, great and sore, which their eyes had seen, he never left them until they had crossed over Jordan, and obtained an inheritance in the good land which he swore to their fathers. So it is with every true pilgrim to the heavenly Canaan. As he bewails his sins, and looks in humble faith to his Saviour, when he remembers all the way which he has been led through the wilderness, in humble dependence upon the sure word of promise, he can say to the God of his salvation, "Thou, which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth."

The experience of our pilgrims in the Valley of Humiliation and in the Region of Darkness will form the subject of the present lecture.

I. We begin with their going down into the Valley of Humiliation. This valley commenced at the further side of the hill upon which the house Beautiful was built. In leaving this house, therefore, the

travellers had to go down the hill. They heard of certain robberies having recently been committed on the king's highway, but remembering who was their conductor, they were not afraid. Very sweet were the songs which the birds were singing among the branches when they set forth. It was the custom of Piety, Prudence and Charity to accompany pilgrims to the bottom of the hill, as in this descent their aid was generally required. They performed now this charitable work for our pilgrims, and they told them, as they went, about the feathered songsters to whose tuneful and delightful notes they were listening. These, they said, are our country birds; they sing these notes but seldom, except it be at the spring when the flowers appear and the sun shines warm; and then we hear them all the day long. We often go to hear them, and sometimes keep them tame in our house. They are very fine company for us when we are melancholy; also they make it very delightful to be in the woods and the groves and the solitary places. As they went down to the valley, the hill was steep and the way slippery; but they were very careful, so they got down pretty well. Here, therefore, the inmates of the house returned, telling our pilgrims withal as they departed, that in this valley Christian had had a fearful battle; but, as they were under the care of a valiant conductor, they trusted it would fare better with them. The conductor himself also encouraged the pilgrims greatly, as well as guided them rightly. He told them, "We need not be so afraid of this valley, for here is nothing to hurt us except we procure it to ourselves. Christian's sore battle with Apollyon was the fruit of the slips that he got in descending the hill; for they who get slips

there, must look for combats here." He assured them the valley itself was as fruitful a place as any that the crow flies over. They had not proceeded far before the words of the conductor were verified. They came to a pillar on which it was written, "Let Christian's slips before he came hither be a warning to those who come after." Entirely did the guide vindicate this valley from the evil name that is so generally given to it. "It is," he said, "the best and most fruitful piece of ground in all these parts. The soil is peculiarly rich; it consists for the most part in meadows. See now, at this summer time, how green it is, and how beautiful with lilies! Great numbers have got rich here, and many have wished to arrive at their journey's end, without having any more heights to climb, or ever leaving this peaceful vale. It is the native place of the two delightful sisters, Contentment and Cheerfulness. Those who are engaged in gathering the lilies of this valley never want abundant handfuls of the herb called heart's-ease, to wear in their bosoms. In this valley the King of the Celestial City once had his country-house. He loved it above every other residence, and still, in a great many ways, he shows a peculiar affection for it, and manifests his special favour to such as are in it. The most dangerous part of all the valley is a place called Forgetful Green. Christian had been straying upon this when Apollyon met him." When the guide had thus spoken, one of the pilgrims in particular felt and confessed the truth of all that he had said. This was Mercy, the gentle friend and companion of Christiana. She said, "I think I am as well in this valley as I have been anywhere else in all our journey; the place methinks suits with my spirit." As they all jour-

neyed forward, the exact spot was shown where Christian fought; and the region of darkness (the valley to which they were fast approaching) was pointed out as the place into which the enemy had retreated after his defeat.

Let us not, my brethren, leave this delightful valley without lingering a little while in it, to indulge in serious thought and profitable meditation. It is a place well adapted for such a purpose. When Peter was with his Saviour on the holy mount, and there beheld his glory, he said, "Master, it is good for us to be here;" and he would have gladly tabernacled in that exalted position. "But this he spake, not knowing what he said." Bright and glorious as the Mount of Transfiguration may be, the Valley of Humiliation is far better and far safer for the true pilgrim. Here we may stay and pitch our tabernacle without danger. We know what we speak when we say, "It is good for us to be here."

We may consider this valley as setting before us either a position in life, or a frame of mind, and the descent into it as illustrating those changes in our outward circumstances from situations of comparative prosperity to a low condition, to which the providence of God so often calls us. These changes are severe trials to our pride and love of pleasure, and many, alas! of those whom we would fain hope are yet true Christians, have made grievous slips in their unwilling descent into the valley, and thus brought reproach on the cause of Christ. It may thus represent to us those humbler walks of life which true Christians for the most part are called to occupy; or it may set before us that humbleness of mind which is the distinguishing mark of the true Christian, and which is so peculiarly

happy for himself and acceptable to the Lord. In either of these senses the true Christian may find it extremely good to be in the Valley of Humiliation.

1. Have any of you been called to true repentance and unfeigned faith in the Son of God in the humbler walks of life? Listen for a few moments, while I endeavour to set before you the advantages of the place wherein your lot is cast. But I must tell you at the first, you can possess none of these advantages without a contented mind. If you stumble, as it were in going down the hill,—if you submit to your lowly position in life as to a hard necessity, or pine after your former station, and you feel inclined to envy the prosperity of the wicked, and greatly wonder why a different situation has not been assigned to you—by doing this you are giving the enemy an advantage over you, and exposing yourself to temptations great and sore. But if by the aid of prudence and piety and charity, you have got down the hill pretty well, and you look upon your position in life as the very best for you, because it was assigned to you by infinite wisdom, then you have nothing to fear. It is most frequently from the situation which you now occupy, that the richest notes of triumphant faith to the God of salvation are heard to come. “Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?” No harm can happen to you in your present situation, unless you procure it to yourself. Extreme poverty, it is true, is a sharp trial and a sore temptation; but if you can only exercise humble trust in the power and promise of God, you shall not want. Your position is eminently calculated to bring all the Christian graces into lively and active

exercise. When the Lord's people have no stock of temporal mercies in hand, but when they are kept evidently dependent upon the providence of God for their daily supplies, their brethren in a different situation are often greatly struck by observing the strength and simplicity of their faith and the fervour of their gratitude. Here you may find, and know from your own experience, that godliness with contentment is great gain. Remember that the Lord of glory dignified and made honourable a state of poverty, by assuming it himself when he came to visit us in great humility. Whoever may be so foolish as to despise a lowly condition, you may be confident that he never will. Only follow the Lord fully, trust in him with all your heart, and prefer spiritual blessings to earthly distinctions. If you get a sense of pardoned sin, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding to keep your heart and mind by Jesus Christ,—if you have a good hope of everlasting salvation, to be enjoyed at your journey's end,—ought you not to be satisfied with these? Having these, ought you to be moved, or overmuch discouraged at any of the privations you are called to endure by the way? Be content to be humbled now, and you shall be exalted hereafter. Walk now with the true followers of Christ through the Valley of Humiliation, and in due time with them you shall be made to inherit the throne of glory.

2. But notice, once more, to be of a humble spirit, and to bear about with us a broken and lowly heart, in the best and the truest sense, is to go down into the Valley of Humiliation. And oh, what an excellent spirit is this! Who can sufficiently declare how good it is to be here! This is the spirit pecu-

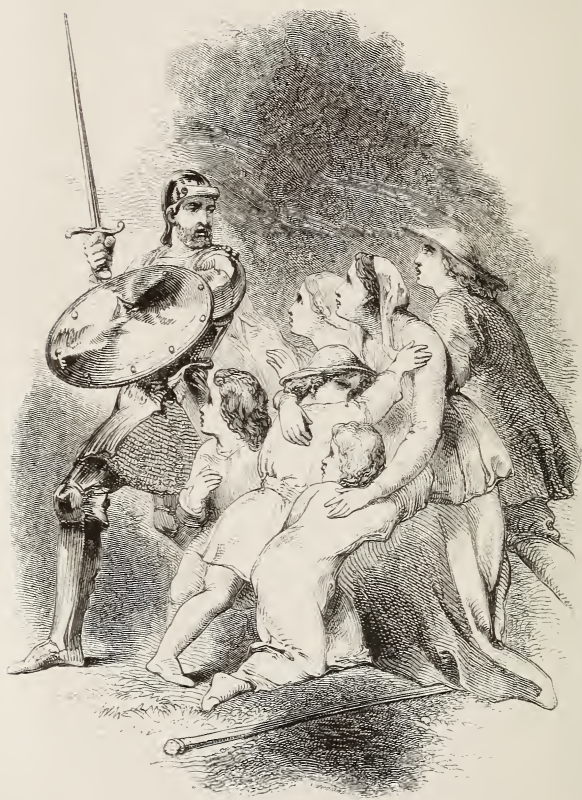
liar to all the genuine pilgrims to the Celestial City. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The more the saints of God attain to such a spirit as this, the more they resemble their King. He was meek and lowly in heart. The person who possesses such a spirit as this, is the person whom the King delighteth to honour. In his sight it is an ornament of great price. He giveth grace to the lowly. Upon all such he looks with unspeakable delight, to receive their prayers, to revive and comfort them, and to dwell in them as in a favourite habitation. As long as you walk humbly with your God, the sons of violence shall not come near to hurt you. While you are thus minded, you can join in the delightful melody which echoes so sweetly in the Valley of Humiliation, and from one generation to another is handed down to the true followers of the Lord :—

"Through all my life thy favour is
So frankly shown to me,
That in thy house for evermore
My dwelling-place shall be."

He will make you to lie down in green pastures. And when he causes his face to shine upon you, you will not only be cheerful and happy, but fruitful and useful. None are so rich in good works, none abound more in the fruits of the Spirit, and none are so eminently useful in their day and generation, as pardoned penitents clothed in humility, and exceedingly little and vile in their own sight. To all these the Lord's gracious promise is fulfilled: "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that

dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." So rich and exceedingly fruitful a place is the Valley of Humiliation.

II. We proceed now, in the second place, to consider the experience of our pilgrims in the Region of Darkness. The Valley of Humiliation being passed, they entered upon another valley, overhung with impending cliffs and dreadful shade, which gave it a perpetual gloom, and gained for it the name of the Region of Darkness. This valley was considerably larger than the one they had just left. Indeed, it was a great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery flying serpents. It was considered to be haunted by evil spirits. Great was the dismay of the pilgrims as they entered this gloomy vale. But they kept up their courage, for these two reasons. First, because they had a valiant guide for their conductor; and, secondly, because they were favoured with day-light. But notwithstanding these advantages, the sights which they beheld, the sounds which they heard, and the commotions which they witnessed in this region, caused them all exceedingly to fear and quake. Strange figures appeared to flit before them; a doleful noise, as of the hissing of serpents, was continually in their ears; and the ground upon which they trod seemed to shake under their feet. All this was especially discouraging to the children, and they said, "When shall we be at the end of this frightful place?" But the guide bade them be of good courage, and look well to their feet, lest haply, he said, you be taken in a snare. Some of the party began to grow faint, but



they were soon revived by the cordials they had received where they had last rested. They were traversing the regions of the prince of darkness. Very painful were the proofs which they witnessed at every step, of his power and presence, his craft and subtilty. On one occasion, an evil spirit appeared to be approaching them, full of fury. But when the conductor drew his sword, and boldly stood his ground, it suddenly vanished out of their sight. Their next cause of immediate terror was the sight of a lion, that came against them with open mouth, as prepared to devour them; but this too, when it observed the preparation for resistance that was made by the conductor, drew back, and came no farther. Still, however, their greatest difficulties were not yet passed. They now came to a place where a dreadful pit was cast up the whole breadth of the road, and such a mist of darkness came upon them that they were unable to see a yard before them. Here again they were encouraged by their guide, who promised them, in due time, a deliverance from this difficulty. What they now felt excited their deepest sympathy for him who had gone before through that dreadful place, without a guide and in the time of night. Christiana said, "None can tell what it is to traverse this region, until they come into it themselves. The heart knows its own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joys. To be here is a fearful thing." Very seasonable were the admonitions of the guide at this time. He told them that now they were doing business in great waters, and going down into the deep. But withal, he reminded them, that now they were especially required to trust in the power of their King, and to stay themselves upon his sure word of

promise. He exhorted them to cry for light; and when they did so, their cry was heard: and there was light. Still, however, their situation was very distressing, and Mercy was induced to contrast their present uncomfortable state with the pleasant places at which they had lingered in time past. To this one of the children replied with wonderful propriety, "It is not so bad to go through this place as to abide here always. Perhaps we must go this way to the house prepared for us, that our home may be made the sweeter to us. I am sure," he continued, "if ever I get out of this again, I shall prize light and good way far better than I ever did in all my life." He was greatly commended for this saying; and very delightful it was to hear from the mouth of the guide, "We shall be out by-and-by." By his prudent caution they had still to look well to their treading, as the snares were very thickly spread over all the ground. They beheld, for their warning, one Heedless, who was cast into the ditch, where he had lain for some time. When he was taken, his companion Takeheed escaped. "You cannot imagine," said the guide, "how many are taken and ensnared in this place, and yet men are so foolishly venturous as to set out lightly on pilgrimage, and to come without a guide." It was very wonderful that Christian escaped. But the King was his friend, and his heart was strong, or else he never could have done it. By this time they drew toward the end of that dismal way.

Here we shall pause for the present. It will not be necessary for us to attempt a full explanation of every particular in this bold and figurative language. We shall try to seize upon the most prominent features which it presents for our instruction. The

passage through this region of darkness represents to us the manner in which Satan (the prince of darkness) works upon the imaginations of men; and sometimes sorely hinders and terrifies the generation of the upright on their way to heaven. Among real Christians temptations of this kind are experienced in a very different degree. Some remain happily in almost entire ignorance of them, from the beginning to the end of their course; while others are buffeted and assailed by them at almost every step of their heavenward way. Let not him that is so tempted despise him that is tempted not; neither let him that is tempted not, despise him that is tempted. If you know what these sore temptations mean, do not think that no one can be a true Christian who cannot enter into your experience; and that trials of this kind are a certain indication of eminent grace. On the other hand, because the enemy cometh on so fast, and is saying continually, "Persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him!"—do not rashly conclude that your case is singular and desperate, and that you are given over to Satan. State your case to some experienced Christian, and follow the directions of some able minister of God's word. By this means you may look to be guided right; and, in due time, light and deliverance will spring up for you. "To the upright there ariseth light in the darkness." But if you are truly relying on Christ to save you, and are ignorant of such distressing experience, do not, on the one hand, covet or desire it, as if it were essential to the Christian character; and, on the other, do not speak of such as are so exercised, as if they were led only by wild fancy and a disordered imagination. Your temptations may be of a different nature. Only cleave to

the Lord, strive against sin, and "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able to bear."

Very encouraging it is to the tried Christian to consider, that in whatever form the adversary may approach, he is baffled and overcome by the steadfast resistance of faith. If he come against you as a serpent, to destroy you with the poison of deadly error; or if he rage against you as a roaring lion, threatening to devour you; only resist him, steadfast in the faith, and you are sure of the victory. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Never think for a moment that the terrors and fears and distresses to which a true Christian is liable are of such a nature that it is better for you to sit still in indifference and unconcern about your soul, rather than subject yourself to such terrors. Many, it is to be feared, are deterred from the great work of preparation for eternity on this account. They cannot bear to think that there can be no true religion without real conviction of sin. To fear and tremble, to be afflicted and mourn and weep—they cannot bring themselves to this. This they must be excused at all events. But even a child that is taught of God can easily point out the folly of such a determination. However the troubles of our heart may be enlarged in this vale of misery, and whatever painful sense we may have of the anger of God against our sins, surely it is not so bad to go through this now, as to have it abiding upon us for ever and ever in the life of the world to come. There are seasons, it is probable, when the most thoughtless have some painful fear of the anger of God against their sins. But they cannot bear to think about it. They dismiss their convictions; and they will med-

dle no more with religious duties, lest they should revive these painful apprehensions. Now consider this, O foolish trifler,—the part you are acting is madness and folly of the most fatal kind. Can you escape the wrath of God by shutting your eyes to those indications of it which he shows you? Who knoweth the power of his anger? Is it not better to be kept from hell by a salutary fear of it, than to go on without any fear until we are finally, and without any remedy, plunged in it for ever? Nothing can be more absurd than to neglect religion lest the fear of hell should discompose your mind. Such neglect exposes us to the eternal endurance of it. Oh, be willing to taste the bitter though short distress to which the tempted believer or the awakened sinner is liable. This will make redemption more precious, and render peace and comfort and heaven, at the last, doubly delightful.

Finally, let every one in the evil day of temptation look well to the numerous snares that are spread on every side to take him withal. When we are in trouble, or sorrow, or spiritual heaviness, sinful and improper means of deliverance are the snares of death against which we have to guard. How many heedless ones fall into these snares, and are led captive by the devil! When they have painful and distressing thoughts about death, judgment, and eternity, they rush into company, they abandon themselves to amusement, or they give way to despair. Others harden themselves against the awful and solemn declarations of the Holy Scriptures, and persuade themselves that these threatenings shall never be fulfilled. And many adopt a system of falsehood and delusion, merely to soothe their minds and to give them present relief. These are some of the

devices of the wicked one, to destroy our souls in the season of temptation. "Be not ignorant of his devices. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. Ponder the path of your feet, that all your ways may be established." Look up, in humble faith, for the upholding hand of your covenant God. Endure a little longer, and in due time you shall come to the end of this distressing way. Having passed through fire and water, a wealthy place at last will open out before you. Though you have been smitten and sore broken in the place of dragons and in the deep, you shall not be cast off for ever. Say therefore now, in the humble confidence of faith: "Thou, which hast showed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth."

HYMN.

O THOU, whose wisdom never fails
To guide thy children right,
When darkness frowns, and fear assails,
Send forth thy cheering light!
If in the lowly vale I tread,
Unnoticed and unknown,
There, by thy gracious Spirit led,
Let me thy goodness own.
Wilt thou not with the humble dwell,
Who hast thy throne on high?
Or will thy majesty repel
The sinner's contrite sigh?
If on my path I see increased
Temptations great and sore,
Oh, teach me, when I see the least,
To trust thy promise more!
If Satan, with his deadly snare,
Besets my darkened way,
Let faith, and hope, and earnest prayer,
Hold out till break of day.

And when the night of weeping goes,
And joy and daylight come,
Then shall I rest from all my woes,
And walk no more in gloom.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, the heaven is thy throne and the earth is thy footstool: thou art the high and lofty One that inhabitest eternity, whose name is Holy; thou hast engaged to dwell with them that are of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Be pleased to look with favour upon us, who desire to approach thee with a broken and contrite heart, and to tremble at thy word. We plead thy promises declared unto mankind in Jesus Christ our Lord. For his sake, give us thy Holy Spirit; and look thou upon us, and be merciful unto us, and let thy tender mercies come unto us, even thy salvation, according to thy word. We humbly beseech thee, sanctify to every one of us the condition in life which thy wise providence has allotted to us. May we learn in whatsoever state we are therewith to be content. If we are poor in this world, oh, may we be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which thou hast promised to them that love thee! May we know from happy experience that godliness with contentment is great gain. Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us, and then we shall really have all and abound, whatever we may seem to want. Create and make in every one of us a new and contrite heart. Lord, thou knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and such great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our mortal nature we cannot always stand upright; grant unto us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations. May it please thee to beat down Satan under our feet, and to preserve us from every snare which may be spread in our path. Hold thou us up, and we shall be safe, and have respect to thy precepts continually. Never leave us nor forsake us, until all our trials and temptations are ended, and thou hast brought us in safety to thy heavenly kingdom. And now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.

LECTURE XI.

GIANT MAUL AND FATHER HONEST

God, in the gospel of his Son,
Makes his eternal counsels known :
Where love in all its glory shines,
And truth is drawn in fairest lines.

Here sinners, of an humble frame,
May taste his grace, and learn his name ;
May read, in characters of blood,
The wisdom, power, and grace of God.

The prisoner here may break his chains ;
The weary rest from all his pains ;
The captive feel his bondage cease ;
The mourner find the way of peace.

Here faith reveals to mortal eyes
A brighter world beyond the skies :
Here shines the light which guides our way
From earth to realms of endless day.

O ! grant us grace, almighty Lord !
To read and mark thy holy word ;
Its truths with meekness to receive,
And by its holy precepts live.

ROMANS XII. 9.

ABHOR THAT WHICH IS EVIL ; CLEAVE TO THAT WHICH IS GOOD.

Love and hatred are the strongest passions that we know. Both these are called into exercise in the believer's heart, and when they are rightly applied, the degree in which they exist is the measure of our grace, and marks the advancement we have made in

the Divine life. As grace prevails and is in lively exercise, the true believer looks with loathing and abhorrence upon himself and all his evil ways, and dreads every approach of sin, in whatever form it may be presented to him. Equally ready is he to delight himself in every thing that reflects the beauty and bears the character of Him whose name is Holy. Absolutely and entirely there is none good but one, that is God. But his holy law and his regenerate children reflect something of the fair beauty of the Lord. And how steadfastly does the believer cleave alike to the people and the law of the Lord! As we loathe ourselves for our sins, and find our delight in the saints and such as excel in virtue, we fulfil, in a measure, the admonition of our text: "Abhor that which is evil. Cleave to that which is good."

These remarks will form a suitable preface to our present subject. It consists of two separate parts.

I. The conflict with another terrible enemy in the form of a giant.

II. The loving intercourse which our pilgrims had with Father Honest.

I. We begin with their conflict with another giant. Our pilgrims were now drawing near to the end of the gloomy region of which we spoke in our last lecture. When they came to the place where Christian had seen the cave, there now issued out of it a giant, whose name was Maul. His custom was to spoil young pilgrims with sophistry. He called out to the conductor of our pilgrims, and laid many grievous things to his charge. He accused him of robbing the country; and robbing it too with

the worst of thefts. "You practise," he said, "the craft of a kidnapper; gathering up women and children and carrying them into a strange country, to the weakening of my master's kingdom." But the guide entirely vindicated his conduct, declaring that he had the warrant of the great King for all that he did; and was prepared to resist even unto death in such a quarrel as this. So the giant and the conductor came to close quarters. During the fight, the women and children stood trembling; and when they perceived the adversary had any advantage, they cried out aloud. At length, with his sword, and by his own cries united to the cries of the others, the champion of truth obtained a complete victory. The boastful monster was slain, and his destructions brought to a perpetual end. Then did they all unite in thanksgiving, and were filled with joy. For a while they rested to renew their strength and regain their composure, after the toil and alarm which they had undergone. In speaking of what had occurred, the conductor declared that in the fight he had received a wound, the marks of which he exceedingly prized. He declared that in his greatest extremity he relied on him who was stronger than all; and once during the fight, when he had been brought to the ground, he was cheered and animated by recollecting that the lowest humiliation of his Master had prepared the way for his highest exaltation. The children especially were highly delighted because they had come to the end of the gloomy region, and that this terrible giant was laid low without any power to do them harm. One of them said, with much simplicity, "I see no reason why we should distrust the Lord of the



country any more, since he has given us such deliverance as this."

Now, whether we recur to the name, the abode, or the practices of this giant, we cannot doubt who he is intended to represent. His very name bespeaks him to be a cruel and powerful adversary; a teacher of lies, who, by lying against the truth and bearing false witness against such as teach the way of God truly, and such as will not be drawn from the simplicity of the gospel, makes havoc of the church and scatters and destroys with the strength of a giant. Oh, the mischief that is done by such monsters as these! All the most terrible weapons of destruction with which we are acquainted, whether they be to crush, or to smite, or to pierce, are united together with accumulated cruelty in the false and slanderous tongue. "A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is a MAUL, and a sword, and a sharp arrow." And what was the place of this giant's abode? He dwelt in the cave which had formerly been the residence of the two giants Pagan and Pope. Like them, therefore, he was not only a teacher of error and delusion, but he came after them and occupied their place. Now, as popery succeeded paganism, and was in a manner grafted upon it, there is a dreadful system of rationalism, which has prevailed in many places where the Protestant profession is made, and where popery has been abolished. By rationalism we mean the system which not only renounces the fables of paganism and the gross delusions of popery, but dares to bring down the sacred truths of the Bible itself to the measure of human reason. This wicked and false system would explain away all miracles, though recorded in the word of truth; and every doctrine

which is clearly beyond the reach of our reason, though revealed by the God of truth himself, it impiously rejects. But not only did this monster occupy the ground of former tyrants and persecutors; we are expressly told his employment was to spoil young pilgrims with sophistry. He would fill them with doubts and difficulties, by inquiring, "How can these things be?" as if their own reason or understanding, and not the revealed truth of God, was the proper ground of faith. It has well been observed, "Reason never shows itself more reasonable than when it ceases to reason upon what is above reason." When we are sure that any thing is plainly revealed in the Bible, however incomprehensible to our finite capacities; it is for us not to reason and argue, but to believe and adore. This is the only sure ground for us to take. It is to prevent our being drawn from this ground that the apostle speaks so earnestly: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

II. We proceed now to consider the loving intercourse which our pilgrims had with a very different character from the one they had just encountered. They had just left one whose subtilties and falsehood they could not too greatly abhor. Now they are privileged to meet with one to whose integrity and uprightness they cannot too steadfastly cleave.

A little before them stood an oak, and under it, when they came to it, they found an old pilgrim, who was there resting for a while on his journey. When the conductor called to him, he manifested the circumspection of an old disciple, by asking,

“Who are you? and what is your business here?” The guide soon convinced him that he had nothing to fear from the present party, as it consisted only of pilgrims on their way to the Celestial City. The old pilgrim had thought they might have been robbers, and rejoiced to find his mistake. Being asked what he would have done had his suspicions been right, and they had really proved to be robbers, he replied, with wonderful spirit, “Done! why I would have fought as long as breath had been in me; and had I done so, I am sure you could never have prevailed, for a pilgrim can never be overcome unless he should yield himself.” Greatly did our guide commend the spirit and resolution of the old man; and by this commendation he showed to him whom he was addressing, that he knew the true nature of pilgrims, for men in general suppose that none are sooner overcome than they. When the guide asked of the old man his name, and the place from whence he came, with great modesty he said, “My name I cannot tell, but I come from the town of Stupidity, which lies beyond the city of Destruction.” A word to the wise is sufficient for them. He had said sufficient to give the right clue of discovery. Being asked if his name was not Honesty, he blushed and said, “Not honesty in the abstract, but Honest is my name; and I wish my nature may agree to my name.” He was surprised at being recognised; but the guide reminded him that there was no secret hid from his Master. Much wonder was expressed how any should set off on pilgrimage from the town of Stupidity, since it is worse than the city of Destruction itself, lying farther off from the sun, and its inhabitants being more cold and senseless. All this the old pilgrim freely admitted, but withal he added,

“Were a man in a mountain of ice, yet if the Sun of Righteousness will arise upon him, his frozen heart shall feel a thaw: thus it has been with me.” Cordially did the guide agree to this declaration, and say, “I believe it, Father Honest, I believe it; for I know the thing is true.”

And now, in his turn, the old man inquired about the pilgrims before him. He asked them their names, and how they had fared since they had set out on pilgrimage. His delight was almost unbounded when he heard from Christiana who they were. “Be it spoken,” he said, “to your comfort, the name of your husband rings over these parts of the world; his faith, his courage, his enduring and his sincerity under all, have made his name famous.” Being told the name of each of the children, he pronounced a suitable blessing upon them separately. They then told him of Mercy, and how she had left her town and her kindred, to come along with Christiana and her sons. At the hearing of this, the old man looked upon her and said, “Mercy is thy name, by mercy shalt thou be sustained and carried through all those difficulties that shall assault thee in thy way, till thou shalt come thither, where thou shalt look the Fountain of mercy in the face.” All this while the guide was standing by, listening with unmingled pleasure, and smiling with joyful satisfaction upon his companions.

All this, dear brethren, gives us a delightful view of Christian fellowship. It shows us how we ought to receive one another, even as Christ has received us; and how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell in unity. Pilgrims to the city of the living God ought to be knit together in one holy bond of truth and peace, and faith and charity. Are

we not wretched sinners, redeemed to God by the same precious price? Have we not all one Father? Are we not members of the same family, brethren and sisters travelling in the wilderness to our Father's house, our heavenly home? Should we then be such froward children as to fall out by the way? Should we not have one heart, one way, and be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love? If, indeed, you have purified your souls by obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, "see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently." Only let your religion be characterised by honesty—let Christian simplicity and godly sincerity appear in all you do, and then every true-hearted pilgrim will give you the right hand of fellowship, and delight in your company. The Lord of the way allows to his pilgrims intervals of rest for their needful refreshment. This excellent pilgrim was reposing under an oak, when the conductor called him. Jesus said to his disciples, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest a while." Be, however, on your guard in the midst of your enjoyments :

"We should suspect some danger near,
When they inspire delight."

Imitate the resolution that was shown by this old disciple. Be determined to resist even unto blood, striving against sin, sooner than basely yield at the first alarm. Do this in the strength of the Lord God, and then no adversary will be able to harm you. A Christian can never be overcome unless he should yield himself. The world thinks that none is so easily overcome as a Christian, because the world understands neither the strength of his prin-

ciples nor the nature of his supplies. This pilgrim had been called from the town of Stupidity to be a consistent and eminent traveller to Zion. Nothing is too hard for the Almighty grace of God. He can bring men from the darkest and deepest shades of vice and wickedness into the marvellous light of his holy truth. We sometimes see those who were ignorant and out of the way, hardened and prejudiced, who seemed to be past feeling, and, humanly speaking, less likely than any others to think about their souls, or the salvation of Christ—such as these we sometimes find far advanced on the heavenly road, and to have outstripped those whose privileges and advantages were far superior. Oh, let us pray earnestly that we may know more and feel more of the transforming, softening, amazing efficacy of the love of Christ; that we may believe, and know for a truth, that though a man were in a mountain of ice, yet if the Sun of Righteousness arise and shine upon him, his frozen heart must feel a thaw!

Nothing is in better keeping with Christian integrity and Christian love, than joyfully to welcome others whom we meet in the ways of Zion. We should open our hearts and tell our joys when others are gathered to the Lord besides those that are gathered. Whoever they be, or whatever they may have been, we should hail their coming with the sincerest delight. No one who feels the great deliverance which Christ has wrought for his people, and the glorious prospect he has set before them, can be indifferent as he sees one after another, and even whole companies, fleeing from the wrath to come, and steadfastly pressing forward to Zion, with their faces thitherward. This is a sight that inspires the joy of the very angels themselves. "There is joy

in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." As we resemble the angels, we shall partake of this joy. But we must not be satisfied merely with entertaining these feelings towards our fellow-pilgrims. We must charge and comfort and edify and encourage one another by every means in our power. This is acceptable unto God and profitable to man. Oh, how glad was the guide when he heard the pilgrims engaged in sweet and delightful communion with each other! And can ministers, my dear brethren, have any greater joy than to witness the fervent charity and brotherly love and consistent conduct of the people whom they wish to conduct to the Celestial City? "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies; fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

HYMN.

FROM deep distress and troubled thoughts,
To thee, my God, I raise my cries:
If thou severely mark our faults,
No flesh can stand before thine eyes.

But thou hast built thy throne of grace,
Free to dispense thy pardons there,
That sinners may approach thy face,
And hope and love, as well as fear.

As the benighted pilgrims wait,
And long and wish for breaking day,
So waits my soul before thy gate;
When will my God his face display?

My trust is fixed upon thy word,
Nor shall I trust thy word in vain:
Let mourning souls address the Lord,
And find relief from all their pain.

Great is his love and large his grace,
Through the redemption of his Son :
He turns our feet from sinful ways,
And pardons what our hands have done.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who showest to them that be in error the light of thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of godliness, pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy, and lead us, we beseech thee, in the way everlasting. Keep us in the true faith of thy holy name, and evermore defend us from all them that are adversaries to our souls. May we never be beguiled from the simplicity that is in Christ. May we always beware lest any man should spoil us, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Oh, save us from all the errors and delusions of the day in which we live ! May we try the spirits whether they be of God, by bringing them to the law and to the testimony ; and always remember that if they speak not according to this rule, it is because there is no light in them. May we be strong through thy word which abideth in us ; and obtain the victory over all who would turn us from the narrow way of life. Oh ! give unto every one of us the good and honest heart, that we may hear thy holy word, and understand it, and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. May we be companions of such as fear thee, and be followers of them as also they are of Christ. Increase in us the manifold gifts of thy Holy Spirit. May we be sincere and without offence ; and receive one another, and love one another, as Christ also hath received us, and hath loved us. Lord, thou knowest our frame, mercifully grant to us such seasons of rest as thou seest us to require. And grant that at all times we may watch and pray, lest we fall into temptation ; and if it please thee to suffer us to be assaulted, may we resist even unto blood, striving against sin. And let sinners on every side be converted unto thee. Let others be gathered unto thee besides those that are gathered. Oh ! let there be joy in heaven among the angels of God over many poor wanderers brought to true repentance, and admitted to the company of thy happy family. Hear us, O gracious Father, for His merits who is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins to his people, Jesus Christ our Lord.

LECTURE XII.

THE FEARFUL HEART.

STAND up, my soul, shake off thy fears,
And gird the gospel armour on ;
March to the gates of endless joy,
Where Jesus, thy great Captain's gone.

Hell and thy sins resist thy course ;
But hell and sin are vanquished foes ;
Thy Jesus nailed them to the cross,
And sung the triumph when he rose.

What though the prince of darkness rage,
And waste the fury of his spite ;
Eternal chains confine him down
To fiery deeps and endless night.

What though thy inward lusts rebel ;
'Tis but a struggling gasp for life ;
The weapons of victorious grace
Shall slay thy sins and end the strife.

Then let my soul march boldly on,
Press forward to the heavenly gate ;
There peace and joy eternal reign,
And glittering robes for conquerors wait.

There shall I wear a starry crown,
And triumph in almighty grace ;
While all the armies of the skies
Join in my glorious Leader's praise.

I PETER I. 17.

PASS THE TIME OF YOUR SOJOURNING HERE IN FEAR.

FEAR and hope are both essential to every pilgrim to the Celestial City. If faith be the animating principle that enables him to put forth the proper-

ties of a living man, fear induces him to fly from the destruction in which he is involved, and hope allures him on to the glory that is set before him. Some pilgrims are more influenced by hope; and some are more thoroughly imbued with fear than others. The union of the two, when properly balanced, constitutes at once both our comfort and our security. Our hope must be chastened with fear; our fear must be brightened by hope. These two are both distinctly referred to by St. Peter in the text. It sets before us the great and glorious God in the twofold character of a Father and a Judge. We call God the Father, and hope beams into our hearts, as we consider the endearing relation in which we stand to him. But God our heavenly Father is also our Judge. Without respect of persons he judgeth every man according to his works. We consider this, and feel that through every part of our way home to our Father's house, we must pass the time of our sojourning here in fear. The character of a true pilgrim, whose name was Fearing, will form the subject of the present lecture. His character is drawn with wonderful life and accuracy. You, must not, however, think that he is a character in all things for our imitation. When fear prevails almost to the exclusion of hope, it is then an infirmity, and interferes greatly with both our comfort and our usefulness. Bear this in mind, as the features of this interesting character are set before you. Copy what is gracious and heavenly, but guard against what is dishonourable to God and injurious to your own soul.

- I. We shall consider the character of Fearing.
- II. The conversation of the pilgrims about him.

I. With regard to his character. Soon after our pilgrims had formed the acquaintance of old Honest, mention was made of a troublesome pilgrim whose name was Fearing. He had set forth from the same town as Honest, and had formerly been much in his company. The guide too, Greatheart himself, had been his conductor to the gate of the city; "and though I found it," he said, "exceedingly difficult to conduct him, I could well put up with this, for men of my calling are oftentimes intrusted with the conduct of such persons." As the conductor was so well acquainted with Fearing, from the beginning to the end of his course, he was desired to give a few particulars concerning him; and this was the affecting description which he gave.

Fearing, he said, was always afraid that he should come short at the last of the place whither he desired to go. He had lain for above a month at the Slough of Despond; neither durst he venture, although he saw several go over before him, and many of them had offered to lend him their hand. But he would by no means go back. He never once entertained such a thought. His heart was fixed upon the Celestial City. He said he should die if he came not to it; and yet he was dejected at every difficulty, and stumbled at every straw that any one cast in his way. At length, one sunshiny morning, nobody knows how, he made a venture and got over the Slough of Despond; and when he was over, he would scarce believe it. He appeared, poor man, to have an ever-flowing spring of despondency in his own breast. When he got up to the Wicket-gate, there he stood trembling a very long while before he ventured to give a single knock. When the gate was opened, others constantly stepped in before him. He con-

tinually shrunk back, saying that he was not worthy. Many who came to the gate after him obtained admittance before him. It was very affecting to see him lingering in this place, for though he durst not boldly advance, he would not for the world go back. After long hesitation, at length, he ventured to give a small rap or two. The gate was opened immediately; then he shrank back as before. But the man at the gate (his name was Goodwill) knew well the kind of person with whom he had to deal. He therefore stepped out after him, and said, in the kindest manner, "Thou poor trembling one, what is thy petition; and what is thy desire?" But even this was not sufficient to allay his fears, for he fell down as one in a swoon. Then did Goodwill marvel to see him so faint; and said, "Peace be to thee; I have opened the door; come in, for thou art blessed." With that he got up and went in, trembling; and when he was in, he was ashamed to show his face. But notwithstanding this, he was in no wise cast out. He received all needful directions, and was shown the way to the Interpreter's House. But arrived there, the same behaviour was again seen at the door of the house, which had been witnessed at the Wicket-gate. He lay there about in the cold a good while before he would adventure to call; still was he as loath as ever to return. He had even in his bosom a letter directed to the Interpreter himself, desiring him to furnish this poor trembling pilgrim with a valiant guide all the way to the city, because he was a very chicken-hearted man. And yet for all this he was afraid to call at the house. But at length he was allured in; and wonderfully kind the Interpreter showed himself to him. When his letter was presented, the Interpreter said at once,

it should be done. Even Fearing himself was not a little comforted by the treatment he here received ; for the master of that house is very pitiful, especially to them that are afraid, and carried it so towards him as might tend most to his encouragement. When he had been taught the usual lessons, and received the usual cordials, forward he set, under the guidance of Greatheart. He was a man of few words, but he would often sigh aloud. When they came to any monument of severity, he would say, "That will be my end." At the cross and the sepulchre he seemed really glad, and would have lingered there looking for ever. He made nothing of the hill Difficulty, and did not flinch from the lions. His trouble was not about such things as these, but about his acceptance at the last. The guide got him into the house Beautiful almost before he was willing. He could not open his mind, and tell his experience like other people to the inmates there. He desired much to be alone ; yet he always loved good talk, and would often get behind the screen, to hear it. He also loved much to see ancient things, and to be pondering them in his mind. Though very anxious for information, when in the company of those who were well able to give it, he durst not be so bold as to ask questions. He went down the hill uncommonly well into the Valley of Humiliation ; for he said he cared not how mean he was, if only he might be happy at the last. He counted himself a happy man, and looked like one, all the while he was in that valley. But when they entered into the Region of Darkness, he was well nigh utterly consumed with terror. He seemed, by the continual expression of his fears, to invite the adversary to come and fall upon him. But at that time the valley was uncom-

monly still. A special check had been put upon the evil spirits that walk in darkness, by the Lord of the country, because a true, though very timid pilgrim at that time was passing through. In *Vanity Fair* his behaviour was most extraordinary. Here he was roused up into vehement indignation. It was wonderful that he was not there martyred, so hot was he against their fooleries. He was also very wakeful over the Enchanted ground. But when they came at the river where was no bridge, the prevailing feature of his character again broke forth in all its distinctness. He said, "Now I shall be drowned for ever, and never see that face withal which I have come so many miles to behold!" But what was especially remarkable, the river at that time was most unusually low and shallow; so that, after all his sorrowful fears and dark forebodings, this poor trembling pilgrim crossed over nearly dryshod. The enemy was as still as a stone until he had clean passed over. And when the guide finally took leave of him, as he was going up to the Celestial Gate, and wished that he might have a good reception above—lo! his trembling spirit is left with his mortal dress in the river, and this was his joyful reply, the last words that he ever uttered, "I shall! I shall!" So they were parted asunder the one from the other.

Are any of you, dear brethren, pilgrims of a fearful heart? Oh, that I could convince you how groundless are your fears, and that I could really say to your innermost heart, Be strong, fear not! That I may not comfort those who ought not to be comforted, consider for a moment two or three features of this man's character, which clearly prove him to belong to the generation of the upright.

1. His heart was thoroughly set against all sin. Whatever difficulties and trials he had to encounter, and however great was his fear, he never once entertained the idea of turning back. This proves him to be a partaker of that fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom. His was not the carnal fear of the wicked. Carnal Fear and Filial Fear are no relations. Their surname indeed is alike, but they are two distinct and separate families. They are sprung quite from a different stock. One is from above; the other is from beneath. One is naturally descended from fallen Adam: the other is graciously derived through believing Abraham. One is the child of him who said, "I heard thy voice and I was afraid, and I hid myself:" the other is the offspring of him to whom it was said, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." This poor trembling Fearing traced his pedigree to Filial, not to Carnal Fear. He did not belong to the fearful and unbelieving who can never enter into the walls of the city. He was possessed of that gracious principle, by which men depart from evil; and by which they are preserved from departing from God. It was the anger of God, and sin which kindles it, that he especially feared. He felt that he was a poor sinner exposed to the anger of God, and therefore he was afraid. He felt that he was a frail creature, passing through a wilderness full of snares and dangers and powerful adversaries, and therefore he passed the time of his sojourning here in fear.

2. Again, notwithstanding the weakness of his faith, and his slowness of heart to apply to himself the precious promises of the gospel, his mind was supremely fixed upon heavenly things. Nothing

but the good things which God has prepared for his people could satisfy him. The desire of his soul was to the Lord, and nothing, he was certain, but his favour and presence and blessing could put joy and gladness into his heart. He said he should die, if he did not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living. He loved to contemplate the cross on which the Divine Saviour poured out his soul unto death, and to gaze upon the sepulchre in which he was laid for our sins, and from which he rose again with power and great triumph for our justification. His hope indeed was very faint. He had little comfort from it. He seldom spoke of it. Many thought that he was all fear, and that he had no hope. But a hope he had, such as it was; and this was the source from whence it arose—the Saviour's cross, the Saviour's tomb. In the secret recesses of his heart, he could say:

“This all my hope, and all my plea,
Jesus has lived and died for me.”

He could not, like many others, tell of his experience. As it appeared to himself, he had very little to tell. But he really loved the company and the conversation of the godly. They, he was convinced, were the excellent of the earth; and in them was all his delight. He longed to be like them, and to listen to their animating talk. He was heartily desirous to cast in his lot among them now, and to be numbered with them in glory everlasting.

3. Once more; in addition to this hatred of sin, and those spiritual desires, this trembling pilgrim was evidently delivered from the love of this present evil world. Vanity Fair spread in vain its glittering attractions before him. It had no charm for him. He was crucified to the world, with all its

vain pomp and show. A poor sinner, with a realizing sense of eternal things before him, smiles at the baubles and trifles and vanities which others so hotly pursue. Nay, at such a sight as this, his spirit is stirred within him; and he cannot altogether hold his peace. He is almost ready to run in among the thoughtless triflers, and to say, "Why do you such things!" But he does not this in a self-righteous spirit. Oh, no! he feels the Valley of Humiliation is the proper place for him. However deep a sense he may have of his own vileness, he desires to be still viler in his own sight. He goes with a good grace into the lowest seat. That is the place that suits him best: and his language is, "I care not how mean I am, so that I may be happy at last."

If you, dear brethren, possess these genuine features of a true pilgrim, be of good comfort; and do not yield to the gloomy doubts and distressing fears that so continually oppress you. If you are more afraid of sin than of any thing beside; if all your hope is fixed on Christ; and if your affections are really set on things above, and not on things beneath,—then have you scriptural evidence that you are born of God. You are on your way to your Father's house; and at the end of your journey you will be welcomed as blessed children: why then should you give way to cruel doubt and tormenting fear?

"Why should the children of a king
Go mourning all their days?"

Cherish indeed, and keep to the last, a godly fear—a fear of sin, a fear of your own frailty, a fear of coming short at the last. In this sense, "blessed is the man that feareth always." But seek to maintain, along with this, a lively hope of God's mercy through

Jesus Christ. The two can well exist together. They do not destroy one another; but they mutually support and strengthen each other, until he in whom they have existed is safely brought to the end of his pilgrimage. If you belong to the family of the true Fearings, you carry as it were a note of necessity in your bosom to the King of the Celestial City; and in a special manner through every part of your journey the King shall be your friend. This, however, is not because he approves of your unbelieving fears; but because he is very pitiful and of great compassion. "He knoweth your frame;" and in compassion to your manifold and peculiar infirmity, he will deal very graciously with you. Have you had no precious instances of this already? Have you not been marvellously carried on hitherto? Have you not often found how groundless were your fears? Have you not been favoured, as it were, with a bright and shining morning, on purpose to give you an opportunity of getting up to the strait gate? Have you not found the gate of mercy opened for you, notwithstanding your backwardness to knock? Have you not found how good and gracious the Spirit of the Lord is, notwithstanding your slowness of heart to ask for him? Oh be not faithless, but believing! "He who has been with you in six troubles will not leave you in the seventh." If the Lord had meant to kill you, he would not have showed you such things. Your very fear shall be the means of keeping you from that which you fear. Who is it that hath said, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me?" Hope still in God, and the same goodness and mercy which has followed you all the days of your life shall be especially manifested to you in the closing

scene. When you have come to the end of your pilgrimage, and your feet actually approach the verge of Jordan, he who had led you, and borne with you all your life long, will not leave you in death. He will assuage your swelling fears, dividing the waters with his glorious arm ! In answer to your humble petitions, and in compassion to your infirmity, the river shall be remarkably low. The enemy shall be still as a stone. You shall pass over, as it were, dryshod. And when the world is receding from your view ; when the glories of the better land are bursting upon you ; when faith is rapidly hastening into sight, and hope is well nigh swallowed up in full enjoyment, should any one near your dying-bed ask if you are not ashamed of all your unbelieving doubts and fears, your delightful reply will be : " I am ! I am ! "

II. We have still, for a little while, to consider the conversation which took place among the pilgrims about the person whose history they had heard. The conductor who related this affecting account, declared he never had a doubt respecting this poor pilgrim, who had so many doubts about himself. In addition to this he added, he was a man of a choice spirit : only he was always kept very low ; and that made his life so burdensome to himself and so troublesome to others. He was, above many, tender of sin ; he was so afraid of doing injuries to others, that he would often deny himself that which was lawful, because he would not offend.

Father Honest inquired, How so good a man could be so much in the dark ? To this question a most exquisite answer was given. It arose partly from the measure of grace communicated to him, and

partly from his natural and special infirmity. With regard to his measure of grace, this man Fearing had drank deeper into the spirit of godly fear than of holy joy. God our heavenly Father has so determined that some of his children shall pipe and some shall weep. Fearing was one that played upon the bass. He and his fellows sounded the sackbut, whose notes are more doleful than the notes of the dulcimer. But not only does the bass make sweet melody in conjunction with other music ; it is said to be the ground of all melody. The first string which the musician usually touches is the bass, when he intends to put all in tune. And this is the chord which the great Lord of all usually touches first, when he sets the soul in tune for himself. How seldom can we make any account of profession, which begins not in heaviness of mind ! It was however the imperfection of this true-hearted pilgrim, that he could play upon no other instrument but this with a doleful sound, until he approached the end of his journey.

And this was the other reason why so good a man went so heavily. It was his infirmity. He had doubts and misgivings almost to the last, about his interest in the Celestial City. He had some wrong notion about the nature of saving faith. He probably knew not the difference between the faith of assurance and the faith of affiance. He could not believe that his sins were pardoned, even upon the testimony of God. He felt so much that was wrong and amiss within him, that he thought it presumption to consider himself a child of God. He looked more to the work of the Spirit within him for comfort and hope, than to the finished work of Christ, whose atoning blood and justifying righteousness are

freely given to us, and put on us by faith for our pardon and acceptance, without any reference whatever to our own works and deservings. Thus this good man, for the most part, went mourning all his days, and neither enjoyed his religion, nor glorified God, nor benefited others as he might have done, had he cherished with his godly fear a lively hope of his acceptance in Christ.

All the pilgrims were greatly edified by this account of poor Fearing; and from the eldest to the youngest, they were each able to discover some feature in his character in which his case and their's resembled each other. "This relation," said Christiana, "has done me good. I thought nobody had been like me; but I see there is some resemblance betwixt this good man and myself. Only we differ in these two points: his troubles broke out; I kept mine within. He again was so troubled that he was discouraged from knocking at the houses provided for pilgrims; but my troubles made me knock the louder." Mercy, too, discovered this point of resemblance betwixt herself and this trembling pilgrim. "Like him," she said, "I have ever been more afraid of the lake, and the loss of a place in the city, than I have been at the loss of every thing else. Oh, I have said, may I only be admitted there, it is enough, though I part with all the world to win it!"

"My fear," said one of the boys, "has often made me think that I cannot be a true pilgrim to the Celestial City. But if it was so with such a good man as he, why may it not also go well with me?" To this one of his brothers replied, "No fear, no grace: though there is not always grace where there is fear of hell, yet be sure there is no grace where there is no fear of God." This saying of the child was

highly approved by the conductor. And he concluded the conversation about Fearing by saying : "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom : and to be sure they who want the beginning, have neither middle nor end."

Let us each then, dear brethren, commune for a moment with our own heart, and seriously inquire, Am I possessed of that fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom ? Has the God of all grace mercifully implanted this gracious principle within my heart ? Has the great Lord of all, with his own right hand, touched the chord of godly sorrow for sin in my soul, that it may be tuned to celebrate the wonders of redeeming love, and the praise of the Lamb for ever and ever ? Consider, dear brethren, well, the first note. You can never have a harp in your hand, and sing in the Celestial City the praises of Him who loved you and redeemed you to God by his blood, if you have never mourned over your wicked heart, if you have never sorrowed after a godly sort for sin. No man can learn that song but the redeemed from the earth. And who are the redeemed from the earth, but poor burdened sinners, who have felt and bewailed their guilt and pollution ; and who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb ? It is not, my brethren, too much for a faithful minister to say : "I care not for that profession which begins not in heaviness of mind." Remember, this gracious principle is expressly promised in answer to diligent, earnest and persevering prayer. "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding ; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures ; then shalt thou under-

stand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

If you feel that in many things you are of a fearful heart, endeavour, by simple faith, to realize the love of Christ to your soul. Simple faith will kindle your love, and make it wax warm; and love like this will cast out fear,—all fear that has torment. You may have strong misgivings which you never breathe to another; but oh, be sure to be excited more by your troubles to knock the louder at the door of mercy! Sad, indeed, is your case, if what ought to make you more instant in prayer only causes you to restrain prayer! It is wholesome fear which makes us pray more earnestly; and fills us constantly with a godly jealousy, lest, a promise being given us of entering into rest, we should come short of it. Do not write bitter things against yourself, because your fears are very great and very many. Other true pilgrims have been harassed with these almost all their way to Zion, and yet have arrived there safely at last. Who can tell that it shall not be so with you? So far from your fears being a proof that you have no grace; if you had no fear of God, it would certainly prove you to be destitute of grace. Only let the hope of God's mercy, promised in Jesus Christ to all penitent sinners, be mixed with your habitual fear of his displeasure, and then it shall certainly be well with you at the last. You are a true pilgrim to the Celestial City, notwithstanding your continual fear. You declare plainly that you are seeking a better country; and you pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. Have now, for your companions, such as fear God and think upon his name. Speak often one to another of the good land to which you are going. Soon the days

of your pilgrimage will be ended. And in the day of the manifestation of the sons of God he will be mindful of them that fear him, both small and great; and very precious and very honourable shall they be in his sight. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

HYMN.

My God, I hate all sinful ways,
And would be only thine;
But fear prevails, and with amaze
I view this heart of mine.

How shall I come before thy face,
Thou Majesty divine?
Say, wilt thou visit with thy grace
This wretched heart of mine?

Do not thy people all reflect
Thy light, and brightly shine!
But tell me, Lord, can I expect
Light in this heart of mine?

I mix among thy precious saints,
And to their ways incline:
They speak their joys, but sad complaints
Come from this heart of mine.

Lord, when my course is almost o'er,
And life and breath decline;
How shall I reach the blissful shore,
With this sad heart of mine?

My Saviour, let thy perfect love
With godly fear combine;
I shall not in thy courts above
Bewail this heart of mine.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, great art thou and greatly to be feared. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name! Mercifully look upon us, for the sake of thy Son our

Saviour Jesus Christ. Give us, we beseech thee, thy Holy Spirit; and make us to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy name. Thou takest pleasure in them that fear thee, and put their trust in thy mercy. Save us, we beseech thee, from the carnal fear of the wicked, and put into our hearts the humble filial fear of thy children. May we seek our rest in thee, in thy power, and the light of thy countenance, and have our hearts surely fixed where true joys are to be found. Save us from this present evil world; and may none of its pomps or vanities have any attraction for us. And oh grant, that having these marks of our spiritual birth, we may rejoice in humble hope, while we continue to tremble with godly fear. Say to our fearful hearts, by the effectual voice and power of the true Comforter, Fear not, be strong. Lord, grant that the things which we have now heard may do all of us good. May none of us lack that which is the beginning of true and saving wisdom. Impress it deeply upon our minds, that if we have not the beginning, we can have neither the middle nor the end of a godly life. Do thou, therefore, begin the good work in our hearts, and perfect that which concerneth us. Prepare us all, as instruments, to show forth thy praise. Create and make in us new and contrite hearts. May the deep tones of godly sorrow, and lowest abasement for all our depravity and sin, constantly proceed from every one of us. May we never forget that we are sinners, and that our safety consists in fearing always, and passing the time of our sojourning here in fear. But oh grant, at the same time, we may know that we are pardoned sinners; and let not our fear of thy just displeasure prevail over our humble hope in thy mercy. Revive and comfort our drooping hearts. If it please thee, may we learn the notes of joy and triumph, as well as the voice of weeping and crying, in the house of our pilgrimage. But however this may be; if through our manifold infirmities we go mourning all our days, and cannot rejoice with the gladness of thy people here, oh grant that we may be found with them, and rejoice with them hereafter. Forbid it, Lord, that we should be found with the fearful and unbelieving at the last. In the day when thou shalt make up thy jewels, may we be found with them that have feared thee, and thought upon thy name. Admit us, when the days of our mourning are ended, into the New Jerusalem, where the voice of complaining is never heard, and where sorrow and sighing can never come. Hear us, O Lord our God, and save us, and bless us, and comfort us, through him who loved us, and redeemed us, and gave himself for us, thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.

LECTURE XIII.

SELF - WILL.

Oh bless the Lord, my soul,
Let all within me join,
And aid my tongue to bless his name
Whose favours are divine.

O bless the Lord, my soul,
Nor let his mercies lie
Forgotten in unthankfulness,
And without praises die.

'Tis he forgives thy sins,
'Tis he relieves thy pain,
'Tis he that heals thy sicknesses,
And makes thee young again.

He crowns thy life with love,
When ransomed from the grave;
He that redeemed my soul from hell
Hath sovereign power to save.

He fills the poor with good;
He gives the sufferers rest.
The Lord hath judgments for the proud,
And justice for the oppressed.

His wondrous works and ways
He made by Moses known;
But sent the world his truth and grace
By his beloved Son.

2 PETER II. 10.

PRESUMPTUOUS ARE THEY, SELF-WILLED.

THE Holy Scriptures not only set before us many excellent characters to imitate; they also describe to us, at full length, the features of the wicked, that we may avoid their errors, and turn with abhorrence

from their evil ways. In this chapter we have a very awful exhibition of scoffers and apostates and self-deceivers. The spirit by which they are actuated is especially pointed out in the two words of the text: "Presumptuous are they, self-willed." You will remember that in our last lecture we were considering the character of a man called Fearing. We are next introduced to a very opposite character; his name was Self-will. Our author is exceedingly happy in contrasting the different characters that he sets before us. He awakens our deepest sympathy by his touching description of a good man; and then he as strongly calls forth our indignation by drawing, with the same master-hand, some designing hypocrite or wicked deceiver.

I. We shall consider the character of Self-will.

II. The reflections of the pilgrims upon him.

May it be our language respecting this man, and all such, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united!"

I. Consider the character of this presumptuous Self-will. He pretended to be a pilgrim, though he never came in at the gate which stands at the head of the way. In conversation, it was very evident, that as his name was, so was he. Self-will was his name, and presumptuous, self-willed was he. He neither cared for man, nor argument, nor example. What his mind prompted him to, that he would do, and nothing else. The principles which he held were detestable in the extreme. He held that a man might follow the vices as well as the virtues of

pilgrims; and that if he did both he should certainly be saved. I do not mean that he thought it possible for the best to be surprised and overcome by temptation, and so to fall into the sin of the worst kind. Had this been his notion, he could not have been blamed for it; because we are exempted from no vice absolutely, but on condition that we watch and strive. This was not the notion of Self-will. He thought that it was excusable and allowable to imitate the sins and failings of genuine pilgrims. And what made this vile notion still viler was this: he even presumed to justify and defend it from that holy book, which is the pilgrim's unerring guide-book to the Celestial City, and which cannot do otherwise than lead in paths of righteousness. For instance, he mentioned the dark spots that appear in the character of David, and the sad degeneracy that is recorded of Solomon, and said, "Why could not he have the same, and yet get safe beyond the river at the last?" He said that Sarah, and Rahab, and others had lied, and why might not he? The disciples, he said, went at the bidding of their Master, and took away the owner's ass, and therefore he could do so too. He said that Jacob got the inheritance of his father in a way of guile and dissimulation, and therefore he might practice the same. This dreadful and odious perversion he pretended to qualify in this manner. He did not say that any man might practise these vices; but that the man who had the virtues of those who did such things might be excused for copying their vices also.

Let us pause, my brethren, a few moments, to receive instruction from this fearful character. We should look upon him with similar feelings to those with which the mariner regards the beacon that

appears in the sea to warn him of a hidden rock, or an irresistible whirlpool. There is no hope for the salvation of a man who deliberately adopts these horrible sentiments. He will be dashed to everlasting destruction; he will be hurried down, with irresistible violence, to the bottomless pit; and he will utterly perish in his own deceiving. It is deeply affecting and full of solemn admonition, to observe the first commencement and progress of such fatal deception. A man pretends to be a Christian, though he has never come in at the gate which stands at the head of the way. He is sure that he is a converted man; he is positive that his sins are forgiven; or else he takes for granted that he was regenerated in baptism, and that he has no need of a thorough change of heart; when all the while he has never come, as a convinced sinner, for pardon and mercy to the only Saviour of sinners. He is still in his natural, unconverted state; his proud will has never been subdued; he has never become as a little child, and consequently he cannot see the kingdom of God; and yet he presumes that all is well, and will not believe that he has any thing to fear. His own will is his only law; and he shows in conversation that he regards neither argument nor example; he will do even as he lists. Now observe, dear brethren, these are the people who fall into the most fatal errors and mistakes. These are the people who wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction. They are determined to reconcile a wicked life with the hope of salvation. They are very anxious to find some sanctions for their pernicious opinions. They refer to the Bible for this purpose; and sometimes, in righteous judgment, God suffers them to succeed. Oh, fearful success! Oh, dreadful perversion! They

have learned to extract wormwood from the honeycomb. They imbibe error from the fountain of truth ! They learn wickedness from the word of righteousness ! They draw out damnation from the wells of salvation ! Self-willed and unsanctified men are not able to argue and reason upon the sacred truths of the Bible. "A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not." A humble mind, or a contrite heart, has not any difficulty in those parts of Scripture, where others of an opposite character are stumbled and offended, and snared and taken. The words of Holy Scripture are full of the clearest instruction to every individual who is of a teachable mind, and in whose heart love of sin is not the predominant principle. "There is nothing froward or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge." Have it always, dear brethren, deeply imprinted upon your minds, that a meek and teachable heart, which the Holy Spirit alone can give, is absolutely necessary to preserve us from error, and to enable us to profit by the heavenly instructions contained in the Bible. "Who is wise, and he shall understand these things ? prudent, and he shall know them ? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them : but the transgressors shall fall therein." People that love sin, and who are determined to practise it, may find, as they think, excuses and palliations for it in that book which expressly declares how hateful and abominable it is in the sight of God, and how surely it will be visited with his righteous displeasure. But the upright turn not to the sins and inconsistencies of God's people to find out the manner in which God regards sin. They turn to his own most

holy law and to his own express declarations. They know that sin is the transgression of the law; that this law is so holy, just and good, that its universal observance would change this vale of misery into the paradise of God; and that so dear is the honour of this law in the sight of him who made it, that the smallest deviation from it kindles his righteous displeasure and incurs his awful curse. They consider, too, that if his own people have transgressed, with what a heavy rod their offences have been visited, and in what a variety of ways God has manifested his displeasure against them. Did Jacob go unpunished for his dissembling? Did David go unpunished? Are we not expressly told with regard to his dreadful crime, "The thing that David had done displeased the Lord?" And was not this dreadful sentence inflicted upon him—"Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house, because thou hast despised me?" Are not the favours which God had heaped upon Solomon expressly mentioned as an aggravation of his sad degeneracy in his latter years? Oh, under what a dark and dismal cloud did his once bright and glorious sun go down! How does Nehemiah speak of him? "Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin." If, in some instances, the sins of God's people are recorded, without the divine displeasure which followed upon them being recorded too, think not for a moment that God winked at their transgressions, or looked at them with indifference. The very circumstances of their being recorded, proves that he

noticed them ; and his holy nature and his holy law declares, that his pure eye could only regard them with righteous displeasure. Nothing can alter the nature of sin. Wherever it is found, or by whomsoever it is committed, it is that abominable thing which God hateth. "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword ; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready."

II. We proceed now to consider the reflections of the pilgrims upon this man, Self-will. With great force and decision the conductor proceeded to point out the wickedness and falsehood of his perverse conclusions. Will a man take encouragement to sin from the sins which he reads were committed by the people of God ? What, he said, can be more false than such a conclusion ? It is as much as to say, Good men have heretofore sinned of infirmity, therefore we may be allowed to do it of a presumptuous mind. A child by the blast of wind, or by a stone that was laid in its way, has chanced to tumble down and defile itself in the mire ; therefore we may wilfully lie down and wallow in it with impunity, like the filthy animal whose nature inclines it to delight therein. Do not such perverse conclusions evidently prove a man to be blinded by the power of his lust ? To all such, that fearful passage seems to apply, "They stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed." To suppose that we may have the godly man's virtues, while we addict ourselves to his vices, is a fearful delusion. To eat up the sin of God's people (to make it our food, and to find our satisfaction in that which ought to cover us with shame and sorrow) is no sign that

we are numbered among the generation of the upright. I cannot believe, continued the conductor, that any one of this opinion can have either faith or love in him. Father Honest told him what Self-will had to say for himself. He perversely argued that it was more open to tolerate the infirmities we have, than very zealously to protest against them, while at the same time we are still committing them. The conductor rightly called this a very wicked deception. For, he said, though to let loose the bridle to lusts, while our opinions are against such things, is bad ; yet to sin, and to plead a toleration to do so, is worse. The one stumbles beholders accidentally, the other leads them into the snare habitually. It was next observed by one of the party, with very great point, "There are many of this man's mind that have not this man's mouth ;" and that makes going on pilgrimage of so little esteem as it is. They all lamented that this was indeed the case ; but cheered themselves with the thought that he who fears the King of the Celestial country would certainly be preserved from such deadly errors and fatal mistakes.

These fearful mistakes of Self-will induced Christians to speak of others that were of the like nature. "There are strange opinions," she said, "in the world. I know one who said it was time enough to repent when he came to die." The amazing folly of such an opinion was pointed out by the guide. He observed, "If that man's life had depended upon his running twenty miles in a week, he would have been loth to defer the journey to the last hour of that week." The eldest of the party then declared with great solemnity, "The generality of them that count themselves pilgrims are guilty of this folly." He had been long in the ways of Zion himself, and had

taken great notice of the various characters he had seen in the days of his pilgrimage. Some of these different characters he discussed for the benefit of the present party. I have seen, he said, some that set out as if they would drive all the world before them, who have yet in a few days died as they in the wilderness, and so never got sight of the promised land. I have seen some that promised nothing at first setting out to be pilgrims, that one would have thought could not have lived a day, that have yet proved very good pilgrims. I have seen some who have run hastily forward, that again have, after a little time, run just as fast back again. I have seen some who have spoken very well of a pilgrim's life at first, that after a while have spoken as much against it. I have heard some, when they first set out for the city, say positively, "There is such a place;" who, when they seemed to be almost there, have come back again, and said, "There is none." I have heard some boast what they would do in case they should be opposed, that have even, at a false alarm, fled faith and the pilgrim's way altogether.

This conversation, dear brethren, if we only consider it aright, will be found very good and profitable for edification to every one of us.

1. In the first place we may learn from it that it is inconsistent with the lowest state of grace to tolerate or excuse any evil way. Self-will was a bad man, and he wickedly thought that it was of no use to be protesting against all sin, when some of the very best of men are seen to be falling into it. But such arguing as this proves, in the most decisive manner, that a person knows nothing of the great change, without which we cannot see the kingdom of God. The great change which takes place in

every one who is truly born of God, especially consists in this : he is turned from the love of sin to the love of holiness. He has a new and gracious principle implanted in him, which inclines him to love holiness and to hate sin. He would not for the world have God's law less strict, or God himself less holy. "He consents to the law that it is good." He considers the perfect holiness of God as the brightest and most glorious of all his perfections. It is true, when he compares his heart and life with this righteous law, he finds himself condemned of unnumbered transgressions ; but he abhors the thought of desiring the straight rule to be made different in order to countenance his crooked ways. He would not for ten thousand worlds have the Lord God Almighty to be any thing else than what he ever was and ever must be, glorious in holiness, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Oh, my brethren, if indeed the saving grace of God be in us, notwithstanding our daily sins and short-comings, and all our multiplied and aggravated transgressions of the holy law, it will still be the language of our hearts, "O how I love thy law !" We can scarcely appeal to a truer test of a man's state than this. If you hate the law because it is so strict, and because it condemns you, you are still in your carnal, unregenerate state. But if you love it because it is so holy, love it although it condemns you, and are abased in the dust for your unnumbered violations of it, then have you evidence of a new heart and a new spirit.

2. Again, we may learn from this conversation to be constantly on our guard against all the false notions wherewith the adversary seeks to beguile our souls. Without going all the lengths of this Self-will, and without his daring presumption, there are

numbers who, for the most part, think in their hearts as he, but who keep their thoughts to themselves. So true it is, that many have this man's mind, who have not this man's mouth. Oh let us watch against vain and sinful thoughts, if we would not be led on to presumptuous offences. Remember, in the sight of God, "as a man thinketh in his heart, so he is." Who can understand his errors? Surely, when we think how numerous and deceitful they are, and to what awful extremities the smallest deviation from the way of truth may carry us, our wisdom and security can only be found in the constant use of the prayer—"Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."

3. Further, let us be warned of the extreme madness of presuming upon a death-bed repentance. It is very painful to think what numbers are hardened in sin and impenitence, by supposing that it will be time enough to repent when they come to die. This delusion cleaves not only to open and careless sinners, but to very many who make a profession of religion. Perhaps it is not too much to say, the generality of those that count themselves Christians are secretly presuming upon this sad delusion. It is grounded, however, upon entirely a false notion of the source and nature of true repentance. Repentance is the work of God, and not the work of man. It consists not in a cry for mercy when we perceive that the pleasures of sin can be retained no longer, and that the pains of hell are taking hold upon us; but it consists in a new and gracious principle, which causes us to hate sin for its own sake, and because it

is displeasing to God ; and causes us to enter upon a determined course of opposition to it to the end of our lives. Surely if a person were wise, and understood this, he could not delude himself with the fatal notion we have mentioned. To-day we are called to repentance, to-morrow it may be too late. The long-suffering and forbearance of God may be provoked by our careless delay, and he may swear in his wrath that we shall never enter into his rest.

“ Oh hasten, sinner, to be wise,
And stay not for to-morrow's sun ! ”

4. Finally, let us learn a solemn lesson from the fact, that numbers set out with a religious profession, who never arrive at the heavenly Canaan. Many of us, in our progress through the world, have seen most of the strange sights that are mentioned by the aged pilgrim. We have seen persons who once made a loud profession of religion turn infidels. We have seen others whose zeal and love made us heartily ashamed of our own sluggish pace, turn aside quickly out of the way and commit all iniquity with greediness. And others, whom we scarcely expected to hold out for a day, we have seen to make excellent pilgrims and finish their course with joy. We have seen the words verified, “ Many that are first shall be last, and the last first.” Learn, dear brethren, from this, that nothing but an inward principle of grace in the heart, a vital union between our souls and Christ, will be sufficient to bring us safe to the heavenly city. If this be wanting, all is wanting. If this be wanting, all zeal and profession will die away and come to nothing. But if you have this, though your beginnings were small, yet shall you increase in your latter end. You shall hold on your way,

and wax stronger and stronger. The Lord shall preserve you from all evil, and bring you in safety to his heavenly kingdom.

HYMN.

SEARCH me, Lord, and know my heart,
Prove and try my inward part;
Cleanse me from my faults within,
Save me from presumptuous sin.

Though I sin in word and deed,
Still for sin I would not plead;
All my sins I would deplore,
Every secret fault abhor.

Gracious Saviour, let me be
Made in all things like to thee!
Guile in thee was never found,
Let my heart, O Lord, be sound!

Let that grace, which still retains
Power to cleanse the deepest stains,
Fill my heart, and keep my soul;
Every secret wish control.

Lord, to thee myself I give,
By thy statutes let me live;
Make me, to my journey's end,
Watch and fear lest I offend.

PRAYER.

BLESSED Lord, thou hast taught us in thy holy word, that in the last days perilous times shall come, and that men shall be lovers of their own selves, presumptuous and self-willed. Look down, we beseech thee, upon us in these last times, and favourably receive our prayer, which we offer up in the all-prevailing name of Jesus Christ, our great High-Priest. Oh save us from all the snares and dangers by which we are surrounded. Subdue our unruly wills and sanctify our sinful affections. May we none of us be satisfied with a name to live while we are dead. Deliver us from thinking ourselves to be something when

we are nothing, and so deceiving our own hearts. May we enter, by a true and living faith, through Him who is the door, into thy sheepfold. Cleanse us from our secret faults. Keep back thy servants also from presumptuous sins. Let them not have dominion over us, that we may be innocent from the great offence. Let the words of our mouth and the meditation of our heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. May we never stumble at thy holy word, or wrest the Scriptures to our own destruction. May we remember that we cannot belong to Christ if we tolerate or excuse any one sin. See if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting. May we keep all thy commandments, always, even unto the end. May we constantly watch against all our adversaries, lest we should be turned aside by the error of the wicked, and fall from our steadfastness. Teach us to redeem the time, because the days are evil. May we seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near. May we knock before the door is shut; and may none of us have to cry for mercy when the time for judgment is come. To-day may we hear thy voice, and not harden our hearts. Oh, that none of us may be of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Hold thou us up, and we shall be safe. Support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations, that we may endure to the end, and be faithful unto death; and receive at length the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls. These our imperfect prayers we humbly present in the name and mediation of Jesus Christ, our only Lord and Saviour.

LECTURE XIV.

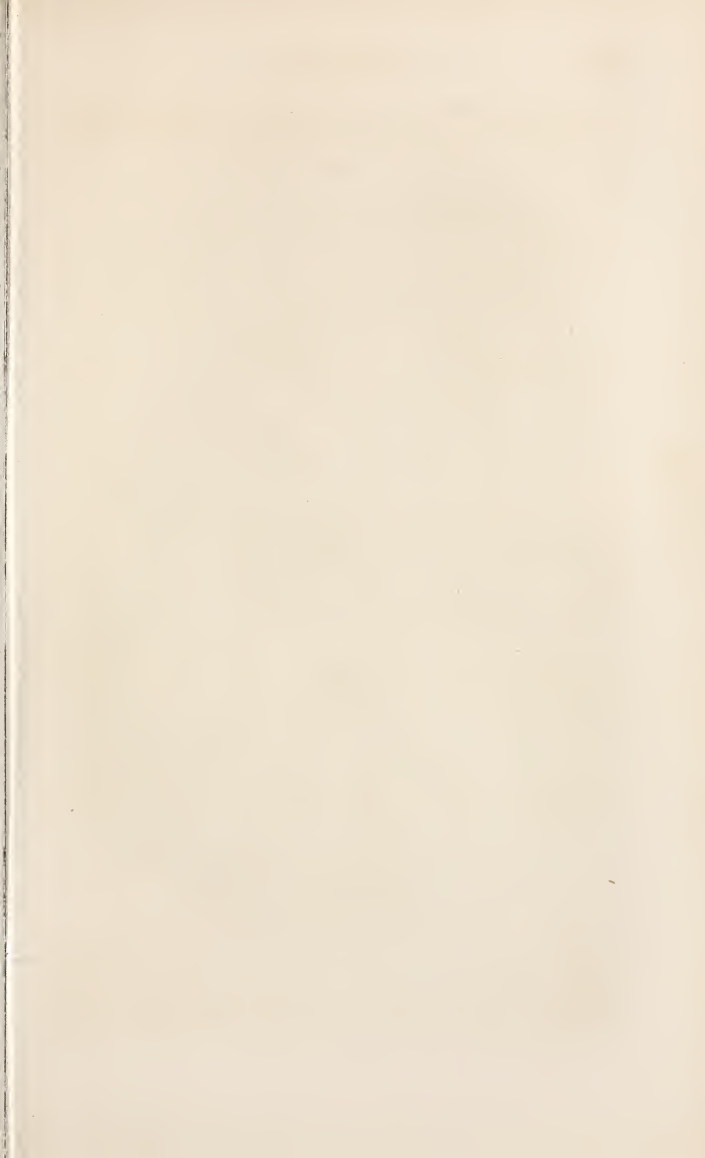
THE HOUSE OF GAIUS.

LET every mortal ear attend,
And every heart rejoice ;
The trumpet of the gospel sounds
With an inviting voice.
Eternal wisdom has prepared
A soul-reviving feast,
And bids your longing appetites
The rich provision taste.
Ho ! ye that pant for living streams,
And pine away and die,
Here you may quench your raging thirst
With springs that never dry.
Rivers of love and mercy here,
In a rich ocean join ;
Salvation in abundance flows,
Like floods of milk and wine.
Great God ! the treasures of thy love
Are everlasting mines,
Deep as our helpless miseries are,
And boundless as our sins !
The happy gates of gospel grace
Stand open night and day ;
Lord, we are come to seek supplies,
And drive our wants away.

ROMANS XVI. 23.

GAIUS MINE HOST, AND OF THE WHOLE CHURCH, SALUTETH YOU.

THE Gaius here spoken of is evidently the same person to whom the Third Epistle of St. John is addressed. He is brought before us by each of the apostles under exactly the same character. Here





we have him as the host of St. Paul, and of the whole church. And St. John addresses him as an eminent Christian of known hospitality, who signalized his zeal and love for his Master, by receiving his ministers and disciples into his house, when they were going forth for the gospel's sake. "Beloved," he says, "thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers, which have borne witness of thy charity before the church."

The reception and entertainment of our pilgrims in the house of one Gaius will form the subject of the present lecture. It is calculated to teach us several important lessons, and especially to impress upon us the scriptural admonition: "Use hospitality one to another, without grudging."

I. Some time before they came within sight of this good man's house, they heard a report of the robbers being on the road, who had some time ago so cruelly handled Littlefaith. But as the party were well guarded and prepared for an attack, the thieves did not venture to draw near. We escape many dangers by being constantly prepared to meet them. Being now weary and fatigued with their journey, they were quite rejoiced to learn that they were approaching the house of Gaius. It was a kind of inn, or open house, into which all pilgrims were freely welcomed. They entered without knocking, and asked at once for the master of the house. He told them that his house was for none but pilgrims; and when he understood the travellers to be such, they were courteously received and made heartily welcome. While suitable provision was making, they entered into conversation. When the host heard who they were that had arrived at his house, his gratification

was very great. He recounted to them several interesting particulars respecting Christian and his ancestors. Their family sprung originally, he said, from Antioch. Many of the family in ancient times had suffered the most grievous hardships and death in its most fearful form, out of love which they had for a pilgrim's life. Then taking notice of Christian's children, he said, "I hope they will bear up their father's name, and tread in their father's steps, and come to their father's end." He expressed his firm conviction that Christian's family was like still to spread abroad upon the face of the ground, and yet to be numerous upon the earth. Then he gave his advice that particular care should be taken in the marriages which they formed, that the generation to come might be brought up to the pilgrim's life. "The family," he said, "can never be extinct: diminished it may be, and there is no better way for extending it, and making it flourish, than to follow the advice I have given." After this advice, the host declared the great satisfaction he had in seeing them under his roof; and proceeded at some length to point out the honour which the Lord of the way has put upon female pilgrims to the Celestial City. He mentioned especially how Immanuel himself was made of a woman; and referred to the singular zeal and love of those women who ministered unto him in the days of his humiliation. Their devotion far exceeded that of the eleven disciples. They were, as it is manifest—

"Last at his cross, and earliest at his tomb."

This reception of the pilgrims in the house of Gaius may impart to us all some useful instruction. St. John holds up the true Gaius as an example for all Christians to imitate, with regard to their treat-

ment of strangers and pilgrims, brethren and messengers of the Church. "If," he says, "thou bring them forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well : because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We, therefore, ought to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth." It is an unspeakable privilege, dear brethren, to be fellow-helpers to the truth. And this we may all be in a great variety of ways. Let us remember that all true believers are our brothers and sisters in the Lord. They are our fellow-travellers, with many wants and surrounded by powerful adversaries, journeying like ourselves to the city of the living God. And shall we not do well to bring them forward on their journey after a godly sort? Ought we not to show our love to our Redeemer, by supporting those who, for his name's sake, have gone forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles, to declare among them the unsearchable riches of Christ? We may not all indeed, like Gaius, have ability or opportunity actually to receive the brethren into our houses ; but by contributing according to our several abilities to the cause of missions, by constantly praying for the extension of the Saviour's kingdom upon earth, and assisting and helping his true followers as we have opportunity, we may show the spirit of Gaius, though placed in different circumstances from him. Oh, in what a strong light has the Lord shown his displeasure against indifference to his cause, and unwillingness to minister to the necessities of his people ! "An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever ; because they met you not with bread and water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt." And in the judgment of the great day,

how will this criminal neglect be seen in its true and proper colours, when the King shall say to them on the left hand: "Forasmuch as ye did it not to the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me." The remarks, too, of Gaius upon Christian families, and the most likely means for perpetuating real piety, from one generation to another, are well worthy of our consideration. Many painful instances are upon record of the children of eminent Christians not taking after their father. They do not bear up their father's name, nor tread in their father's steps, nor come to their father's end. Now where this is unhappily the case, we believe that it may very frequently be traced to a want of proper influence being used by the mother. How immense the influence of a Christian mother in the right bringing up of children! When Christian himself set out on pilgrimage, all his children remained behind; and not one of them was disposed to follow his example. But no sooner was his wife brought to enter upon that way, than every one of the children, overcome by her influence and example and representations, delayed no longer to set off too. It is, therefore, of unspeakable importance that all who have something more than the name of Christians should marry only in the Lord. When a real Christian is equally yoked together with a decided, consistent and spiritually-minded partner, it may be expected that their family will prove a little nursery for heaven. How pleasant it is to see the combined efforts of pious parents, with one heart and one way, training up their children in the true faith and fear of God, and instilling into their minds betimes the principles of industry and order, generosity and kindness. When this is united with fervent prayer,

and the touching eloquence of a good example, such a family is indeed one of the bright spots which we occasionally visit in our way through the wilderness :

“ 'Tis like a little heaven below !”

Here the Christian mother is seen in her proper place, crowned with her proper honour, and diffusing happiness and blessings on every side. She makes no concealment of her real principles. She does not attempt to conciliate others to true religion, by acting in such a way as to make it very doubtful to all serious people whether she is indeed possessed of it herself. She acts from principle ; and all her sympathies and all her affections are drawn out to the people of God. It may be said of her, as it was said to Ruth : “ All the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.” Her single desire is to act as a Christian mother ought to act, to adorn her station, and to fulfil the duties which belong to it. “ She looketh well to the ways of her house, and eateth not the bread of idleness.” Here indeed is a laudable object of ambition ; and she who steadily pursues it shall in no wise lose her reward. “ Her children rise up and call her blessed ; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain ; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.”

II. We pass on from the reception to consider the entertainment which our pilgrims found in the house of Gaius. No sooner were preparations seen for the approaching supper, than one of the young pilgrims observed, “ The sight of this produces in me a greater appetite for my food than I had before.” To this it was replied by the host : “ So let all the

ministrations of his servants in this life produce in you a greater desire to sit at the supper of the great King in his kingdom." All ordinances here are only preparatory to the marriage supper of the Lamb. At the supper, to which all the guests sat down, a wave-breast and a heave-shoulder were first served. They were tender and good, and all the party partook of them. Next they brought a bottle of wine, as red as blood. The host assured them they might drink freely of this without any fear of excess. It was the pure blood of the grape, even the wine which maketh glad the heart of man, without any sorrow or painful remorse resulting from its use. There was plenty of milk, and the host said, "Let the boys take it, that they may grow thereby." Then they brought up in course a dish of butter and honey. Of this they directed all the pilgrims freely to partake, as its property was to clear and to strengthen both the judgment and the understanding. They were informed that the Lord of pilgrims, as he fulfilled his course, partook of this kind of food: according to an ancient prophecy which declared concerning him, "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good." Apples were then brought up, which were very pleasant to the taste. The young pilgrim who had been sick by reason of the fruit which he had eaten, inquired if apples were allowable for them, since it was by fruit of this kind that the serpent beguiled Eve with his subtilty. To this it was replied, "Forbidden fruit will make you sick, but not what our Lord has tolerated." Nuts were afterwards brought upon the table. It was observed that though these spoil tender teeth, especially the teeth of children, yet those who had age and skill to open

them properly, and feed upon the kernels, would be amply repaid for their pains and trouble. While the elder pilgrims were thus engaged, a riddle was proposed by one of the party :—

“A man there was (though some did count him mad,)
The more he cast away, the more he had.”

And thus was the riddle expounded :—

“He who bestows his goods upon the poor,
Shall have as much again, and ten times more.”

Here let us pause a few moments to consider the instruction which is presented to us under the figure of this entertainment. In the provisions brought on this table we have the different parts of social worship and Christian fellowship set before us in a most instructive point of view. The heave-shoulder was a part of the sacrifice, to be solemnly lifted up unto the Lord, in token that all things come from above; and the wave-breast was the choice part of every victim more especially offered unto the Lord : thus signifying that our heart and the best of our energies must be consecrated unto God. Thus together they may very properly be taken as the emblem of prayer and praise. The blood-red wine, so reviving and refreshing to the faint and the weary, represents to us the atoning blood of Christ, which alone can revive a self-despairing soul; and by the application of which a poor sinner is delivered from his distress, and girded with gladness. Milk is the emblem of the plain and essential truths of Scripture, by which babes and learners in the school of Christ are nourished up unto eternal life. Butter and honey have been explained to signify those animating views of God, and his dealings with his people, and those foretastes of heavenly joys, which tend greatly to

establish the judgment, enlarge the understanding, and determine the affections in choosing the good and refusing the evil. Apples are spoken of in another part of Scripture, where they represent the promises and privileges by which believers are comforted in communion with Christ: "Comfort me with apples." Nuts signify harder and more difficult subjects, and which amply repay the pains and trouble of penetrating their inward meaning, though they are not proper to be discussed by new converts and inexperienced Christians.

How good and pleasant a thing it is for Christians thus to be engaged, and to converse together! When a person is by any means spiritually-minded, and has a real taste for heavenly conversation and spiritual exercises, he finds unspeakably more delight at such a feast as this than others find in the scenes and occupations which they prize the most.

"The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets,
Before we tread the heavenly fields,
Or walk the golden streets."

When we can engage in such exercises, with all our heart and with all our soul, oh, how good it is for us to draw near unto God, and to unite with our house in prayer and praise! When we lift up our hearts unto the Lord, and spread all our wants and desires before the throne of the heavenly grace; and when we praise and bless his holy name, and devoutly acknowledge that all our mercies come from him, what can be more delightful than such employment? How reviving it is to speak of the dying love of Christ! His love is better than wine. When those who have tasted and handled what they declare, speak of the glory of Christ and talk of his

power, it has the same effect upon the poor heavy-laden sinner as the partaking of the most generous wine upon him that was ready to perish. He drinks and forgets his poverty and remembers his misery no more! As a person in health relishes his necessary food, so do real Christians, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word of God, that they may grow thereby. Milk, it is true, is especially for babes; but in the kingdom of heaven we must all become as little children. Generally we find, that in proportion as a person is eminent in grace and holiness, he relishes and enjoys the plain and the nourishing declarations of Scripture. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Pass not by the butter and the honey. The discoveries made in the Bible, when our hearts are prepared to receive them aright, are softer than butter and sweeter than honey. Let us seek by these to have alike our will, our understanding, our judgment and our affections all properly influenced, so that we shall be induced to choose the good and to refuse the evil. While we are afraid even to touch forbidden fruit, and abstain from all appearance of evil, let us earnestly seek to embrace, in communion with our Saviour, all the exceeding great and precious promises which he holds forth to his believing people; and to enjoy the unspeakable privileges to which he admits us. It is readily granted that in the Holy Scriptures there are many things hard to be understood. The meaning of every passage does not lie on the surface. It is like the deeply imbedded ore, which cannot be found without diligent search, and cannot be obtained with-

out laborious effort. It is like fruit enclosed in a rough and hard exterior. The shell has to be opened before the kernel can be tasted. A wise and experienced Christian will observe the proper time and company for the opening of such subjects and the expounding of such mysteries. If there be any such passages which trouble and perplex us, we should observe the proper opportunity for having them explained. In addition to earnestly seeking for light from above, we should modestly propose them (not in a captious but in an inquiring spirit) when we are privileged to converse with eminent Christians or faithful ministers. Something is clearly revealed to one, which is a dark mystery to another. Thus by intercourse with each other, and the exchange of their sentiments, believers are enabled mutually to instruct and edify one another. When we meet with parts of Scripture, into the hidden meaning of which we cannot enter, we should feel that we are only babes fit for milk, and own how unskilful we are in the word of righteousness. But we should consider if the great Teacher were to take us into the garden of nuts, or even if some of his experienced people were present with us, to open the mysteries that perplex us, we should then feed with unspeakable delight on those hidden truths, which before we were unable either to touch or to apply.

A passage of this kind we have expounded by Gaius. Men of the world would count it little short of madness to devote a large portion of their property to the purposes of piety and charity. They would consider this as the sure road to poverty, and as likely to bring their families to beggary. But a man with the spirit of Gaius can expound clearly those passages of Scripture which assert the appa-

rent contradiction, that the true way to have and to increase and to lay up, is to give and to scatter and to empty ourselves for the benefit of others. I have been trained up, he will say with Gaius, in this way, a great while. Nothing teaches like experience. I have learned of my Lord to be kind, and have found by experience that I have gained thereby. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." It is very true, dear brethren, that there is no teacher like experience. We are never confidently assured, and fully established in any truth, until we know it from experience. For instance, we may have a kind of impression that Christ is unspeakably precious to his people; we may be almost persuaded that there is a peculiar blessing resting upon a proper observation of the Sabbath; we may hear again and again our Lord's declaration, "It is more blessed to give than to receive;"—but, oh, what a different kind of knowledge is this from experimental knowledge! When we know from sweet experience, the preciousness of Christ, because we have come to him as poor broken-hearted sinners, and have tasted that the Lord is gracious,—when we know the blessedness of the Sabbath, not from the hearing of the ear, but because we found and enjoyed it, and the Lord has met with us, and made us joyful in his house of prayer,—when we know that the liberal soul shall be made fat, not only because God has told us so in his holy word, but because we never made even a little sacrifice of our time, or substance, or strength, or energy for the Saviour's sake and his gospel's sake,

without invariably, in one way or another, being recompensed for it an hundred fold;—then we can speak of these things, and recommend them to others without any hesitation, and with the fullest conviction of their reality. We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard, which we have looked upon and handled, of the word of life. Then we shall say: “Blessed is he that believeth; blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold of it; every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it. Blessed is the man that considereth the poor and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in time of trouble. Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good.”

HYMN.

UNWORTHY, Lord, I am to come
Beneath the happy roof,
Where all thy servants find a home,
But dare not stand aloof.

I love to be with those that love
My Saviour and his ways;
I feel the pledge of joys above,
When joining them in praise.

With them I rest my weary feet,
My drooping spirit cheer;
I join with them, in counsel sweet,
And heavenly wonders hear.

Thy Spirit is not straitened, Lord,
Let me His influence prove;
Enlarge my heart, and shed abroad
The comfort of thy love.

May all thy people, in thy name,
Each fellow-saint receive;
Oh, make of heart and mind the same,
The number that believe.

So none of all thy saints shall need ;
And when thy Church is one,
The world shall say, We see indeed,
The Father sent his Son.

PRAYER.

O THOU who hast promised to be the God of all the families of thy people, look down in great mercy upon us, and bless us, through him in whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed. May we love thy people, and by every means in our power, be fellow-helpers to the truth. As we have opportunity, may we use hospitality one to another without grudging. Help us to discern the image of our Saviour whenever it is reflected by his members ; and for his sake may we visit them, and love them, and seek to do them good. May every social connection that we form be only in the Lord, and such as is sanctioned by thy holy word. Oh do thou sanctify and bless us, whenever we assemble together, either at the family altar, or in social prayer. Help us to fulfil aright the peculiar duties which belong to our several situations in life. Oh bless us, and make us a blessing to all with whom we are connected. Mercifully grant that those who dwell under our shadow may return and come to thee by true repentance. Give us, we beseech thee, the spirit of prayer, and tune our hearts to speak thy praise. May we receive all our blessings as coming from thee ; and may we consecrate the best of our energies, yea all that we are and have, to thy service and to thy glory. May we all be partakers of that precious blood which was shed for the remission of our sins. May we desire the sincere milk of the word of God. Give us, we beseech thee, a right judgment in all things, that we may know how to choose the good and refuse the evil. O gracious Father, thou art able to make all grace abound in us. We humbly beseech thee, therefore, hear our prayers, and pardon our sins, and lift up the light of thy countenance upon us, and bless us, and cause thy face to shine upon us, for the sake of Jesus Christ our only Lord and Saviour.

LECTURE XV.

GODLY EDIFYING AND FEEBLEMIND DELIVERED.

THUS I resolved before the Lord,
“Now will I watch my tongue,
Lest I let slip one sinful word,
Or do my neighbour wrong.”

Whene’er constrained a while to stay
With men of lives profane,
I’ll set a double guard that day,
Nor let my talk be vain.

I’ll scarce allow my lips to speak
The pious thoughts I feel,
Lest scoffers should occasion take
To mock my holy zeal.

Yet if some proper hour appear,
I’ll not be over-awed,
But let the scoffing sinners hear
That I can speak for God.

1 THESSALONIANS V. 11.

WHEREFORE COMFORT YOURSELVES TOGETHER, AND EDIFY ONE ANOTHER,
EVEN AS ALSO YE DO.

It is very pleasant when true believers keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. They ought to act and live as members of the same body and children of the same family. This will be the case as we realize our personal interest in the only Saviour of sinners. The mutual comfort and edification to which, in our text, the apostle exhorts believers is evidently grounded upon their personal

interest in one common Saviour. "God hath not," he says, "appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do." We have to consider in the present lecture,

I. The edifying conversation that was carried on in the house of Gaius. And

II. The deliverance of Feeblemind out of the hands of the giant Slaygood.

Oh, that the spirit of truth, and unity, and godly concord may be poured into all our hearts, that we may comfort and edify one another more than we do!

I. We begin with the edifying conversation that was carried on in the house of Gaius. All the pilgrims, from the youngest to the oldest, felt that it was good for them to be here. After the little ones had retired, the rest were such suitable companions that they knew not how to part. They had much talk of their Lord, themselves, and their journey. They spoke often one to another; thus they had more deeply impressed upon their hearts the important truths in which they were all agreed. They all confessed that we can never mortify our sin until we are first conquered by grace, and that the proper way to convince others that we are alive to God, is to show that we are dying to ourselves. "It is right," said Gaius; "good doctrine and sound experience teach this; for until grace displays itself, and overcomes the soul with its glory, it is altogether without heart to oppose sin. Besides, if sin be Satan's cord by which the soul lies bound, how

should it make any resistance before it is loosed from that infirmity? Nor will any man that knows either reason or grace believe that a person can be a living monument of grace that is a slave to his own corruption." A little history was then told to illustrate the important truth, that different individuals require a different measure of grace to enable them to walk alike in the even path of obedience. One person has much more to contend with than another; his corruptions are stronger, his circumstances are more peculiar. Now, that which heads against the greatest opposition is clearly proved to be the strongest. Then was the fatal mistake exposed, by which it is feared many are deceived; viz., that of taking the decays of nature for a gracious conquest over corruption. When men outlive their evil propensities, they are apt to flatter themselves that they have prevailed against them; but we should seriously remember that the unclean spirit may go out of a man, only to return with seven spirits more wicked than himself, and to make the last state of the man worse than the first. We should be very earnest in bringing our hearts to the scriptural tests of conversion. When the party was assembled in the morning, a portion from the word of God was read, which was the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. A few simple but important questions were also asked, which were suggested by what had been read. "Why," it was asked, "is the Saviour said to come out of a dry ground?" To this it was replied, "Because the church of the Jews, of which Christ came, had then lost all the sap and spirit of religion." In addition to this it might have been added, the royal house of David, from which he was to spring according to the flesh, had sunk into a lowly condition, and bore

at that period no marks of its former greatness. Another question was also asked, which was suggested by the reading of the same chapter, "Why is it said of the Saviour, who is indeed fairer than the children of men, that he has no form nor comeliness?" To this question the true answer was returned. The words are spoken in the person of unbelievers, who, because they want the eye that can see into our Prince's heart, therefore they judge of him by the meanness of his outside. Just like those who know not that precious stones are covered over with a homely crust, and who, when they have found one,—because they know not what they have found,—cast it away again, as men do a common stone.

Here we have a specimen of the kind of conversation which is good to the use of edifying. They who fear the Lord should speak often one to another. If this be done in simplicity and godly sincerity, the poor and imperfect testimony which we are enabled to give may often prove a word in season to others; and we shall frequently find our own hearts quickened and enlarged, as we listen to the communications of others. It is not the mere knowledge of the truth that affects our hearts and influences our conduct. No; it is only when the truth is applied inwardly to us by the power of the Holy Ghost. And how frequently does this great Teacher accompany with his blessing the scriptural truths and sentiments which are proclaimed by one Christian to another! We often find that truths which we have long known appear to us in a different light, and affect us in a different manner, when they are simply delivered by some of our brethren. If we only deeply feel ourselves what we modestly

proclaim to others, what proceeds directly from our own heart will often be conveyed directly to the heart of those we address. Let us seek to have all our sins, and especially our besetting sins, forcibly expelled from us by the Divine power of heavenly grace, lest we fall into the sad mistake of concluding that our hearts are changed, and that we have given up our sins, when, in reality, we are yet in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, and we have only exchanged our sins, or else lack the opportunity of committing them. The practice of reading the holy Scripture aloud, ought constantly to be kept up in every Christian family. This would always furnish a profitable subject for conversation, and suggest many important questions which might very happily be put to the younger branches of the household. Such a chapter as the fifty-third of Isaiah is well calculated to edify and instruct at the same time. Here we have the precious doctrine of the Lord of glory suffering in the room and in the stead of us perishing sinners. Was this glorious branch raised out of the dry ground of a church and nation, that had well-nigh lost all the spirit and sap of religion? Let us not despair, either for ourselves or the place wherein we dwell. Is any thing too hard for the Lord? He can cause the new and gracious principle to spring forth and blossom as an herb, in our barren and dry souls; and amid the fearful lack of spiritual life which we see around us, and the barren and dry land which lies before us, he can cause to grow up trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.

II. We come now to consider the deliverance of Feeblemind out of the hands of the giant Slaygood. It was proposed by Gaius, after his guests should be

well refreshed, that they should walk into the fields to see if they could do any good. A sad and cruel enemy to pilgrims, he said, dwelt not very far off. He was captain over a band of thieves; and if the country could be cleared of her and his men, it would be a very great advantage. This was a piece of service in which Greatheart especially delighted. So he took his sword, helmet and shield; and the others accompanied him with spears and staves. They soon came to the place where this mighty robber had his cave. They found him with a pilgrim named Feeblemind in his hands. His men had taken him, and brought him to their captain, who was preparing to slay him. Thus, our armed and fearless pilgrims had come in a good time. Greatheart fought and conquered the giant; cut off his head and rescued the poor trembling pilgrim out of his hands. The account given by Feeblemind of himself, after his rescue, is worthy of our consideration. "I am," he said, "as you see, a poor feeble creature, both in mind and body. Death used to knock once a day at my door; so thinking I should never be well at home, I resolved upon a pilgrim's life. I left the town of Uncertain, my native place. Though I was scarcely able to crawl along, my resolution was to spend my life in the pilgrim's way. When I came to the gate at the head of the road, much to my surprise and delight, no objection was made, either to my sickly looks or my feeble mind. The man there gave me such things as were necessary for my journey, and bade me hope to the end. The kindness which I received in the Interpreter's house I shall never forget. Because he judged the hill Difficulty too hard for me, he even commanded his servants to carry me all the way up it. And,

indeed, the kindness which has been shown me, from first to last, by all the pilgrims that I have met, has been most surprising. Though none were willing to go on so softly as I am obliged to do, yet still, as they came on, they exhorted me to be of good cheer, and said that they had received a commandment from their Lord, to 'comfort the feeble-minded.' When I came to the place where the bands of the wicked (the giant's men) set upon me, they told me to prepare for battle. But, alas! I had more need of a cordial to enable me still to creep along; how then should I have any strength to engage in such an encounter? I had no power at all against the great company that came upon me. So they took me captive, and brought me to their leader. My mind, however, feeble as it is, did not yield to these sons of violence. They led me against my will to the cave that belongs to the captain of their band. But, perilous as my situation was, I conceived all the while that this terrible enemy should not slay me. And even when he had got me into his den, and to sight and sense there was not the least prospect of deliverance, because I had been forcibly carried, and had not willingly entered into that abode of darkness, I was still sustained with the secret belief that I should, by some means or other, come out alive again. And this was the ground of my hope. I have heard that not any pilgrim that is taken captive by violent hands, if his heart be right to his Master, shall ever die by the hand of the enemy. Neither was my expectation disappointed. I expected to be robbed, and robbed I have been; but I am, as you see, escaped with my life, and it is given me for a prey. For this deliverance I am indebted to my King as the author,

and to you as the instruments. I know not what is before me. Other trials and adversaries I must still encounter. But I am resolved what to do. I will run when I can; and walk when I cannot run; and creep when I cannot walk. As to the main, I thank him that loved me, I am fixed. My way is before me; my mind is beyond the river that has no bridge, though I am, as you see, but of a feeble mind."

It was easy to see, and our pilgrims saw it at once, that the poor man who gave this account of himself was connected with the family of the Fearings. Gaius gave him a hearty welcome to his house; and said that whatever he wanted should be done for him with all readiness of mind. Then did Feeblemind admire greatly that such should be the result of his falling into the hands of Slaygood. It seemed as if the giant had only taken him that he might introduce him to the excellent company he was now enjoying. Howbeit the enemy meant not so, neither did his heart think it.

This little history of Feeblemind sets before us, in a lively manner, much that deserves our most serious attention. Slaygood may represent the ring-leaders or propounders of any false doctrine or corrupt practice, by which the souls of men are beguiled into fatal error or deadly sin; and continuing in it are slain or destroyed. Alas, how many Slaygoods there are in the world! One sinner destroyeth much good. Superstition slays its thousands; and infidelity its ten thousands! And oh, what fearful havoc do drunkenness and sabbath-breaking and uncleanness make of the souls of men! All true Christians should set themselves zealously to oppose and discountenance every false and corrupt system, by which the souls of men are

endangered and destroyed. Why are gifts and graces communicated to us, but that we may lay them out in glorifying God and setting forward the salvation of all men? We must not say, "This is no business of mine—I have other engagements and employments. Let ministers defend the faith and refute error." But is not every true Christian a soldier? Is he not bound to fight manfully under the banner of Christ against sin, the world and the devil? Where, then, can be our fidelity to Christ, if we have no heart for any thing that concerns his glory? It was not ministers, but all faithful people, that St. Paul was addressing when he said: "Now we beseech you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. Whatever influence, or gifts, or talents, we may possess, oh let us use them all in discountenancing error and sin! Let us be valiant for the truth, and set our face like a flint against all those delusions and abominations by which souls are ensnared by the enemy, and plunged into everlasting ruin! If, in the place where we live, or anywhere round about us, any unscriptural notions are prevalent, or any fashionable or deep-rooted habits of ungodliness have a ruinous influence upon men, oh let us do what we can to put them down. Sometimes a true-hearted, though a feeble-minded pilgrim, may be surprised and overcome by some subtle adversary, or some sharp temptation. What a blessed work it is to be employed as the instrument of deliverance to these! The tender care which the Great Shepherd extends to the meanest and the feeblest of all his flock, is wonderfully striking. "He will not break a bruised reed, neither will he quench the smoking flax." Are any

of you, my brethren, to be numbered among these feeble folk? Only let your heart be true and loyal to the great King, and he will not despise or reject you because of your manifold infirmities. "He knoweth your frame; he considereth that you are but dust." Have you been seduced into some false way? or have you, by reason of the frailty of your nature, not been able to stand upright, and so have you been surprised and taken, as it were a prisoner into the enemy's hands? While you deeply bewail your lamentable situation, and the sins which led to it, oh look again and again to the Great Sacrifice of the cross; wash again and again in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, and hope still in God, for you shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. To sight and sense your situation may be very uncomfortable, and you may be quite unable to perceive from which way deliverance can come. But if your heart be right with God, and you humbly put your trust in his help, in due time deliverance shall come. "For the Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, and put their trust in his mercy." Only be right as to the main; and say, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed." And then when you come to the river that has no bridge, he who has hitherto supported you will support you to the end, delivering you from every evil work, and preserving you to his heavenly kingdom.

HYMN.

TREMBLING soul, by tempest tossed,
Lo, I seek and save the lost !
Captives from their bondage free,
Cause the blinded eyes to see ;
Bruised souls I gently bind—
Cheer thee, O thou feeble mind !

Feeble-minded as thou art,
Bid thy gloomy fears depart ;
Strengthened by my glorious strength,
Weakness shall prevail at length ;
Mine is power and love combined—
I will help thee, feeble mind !

Weakest worms shall at my call,
Thresh the hills, and beat them small ;
Human might I still refuse,
Weakness, baseness ever choose.
All my strength the weakest see—
Feeble mind, I'll strengthen thee !

Though unnumbered, powerful foes
Rise, thy journey to oppose,
Earth and hell united stand,
All to pluck thee from my hand,
Vain their efforts ! thou shalt find
Weakness strength, thou feeble mind !

PRAYER.

LORD of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things, thou hast charged thy people to comfort themselves together, and to edify one another. We feel and confess our own sinfulness and ignorance, and insufficiency for any thing that is good. We can receive nothing and impart nothing, except it be given to us from above. Pardon, we beseech thee, all our sins, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and replenish our souls with the riches of his grace, that we may

be able also to comfort and admonish one another. Give us all an experimental acquaintance with the word of life. May the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; and enable us to hold forth the word of life to others. Help us to instruct our families out of thy holy word; and give us all grace to walk according to its heavenly directions. Open our eyes and open our hearts, that we may see the beauty, and feel the preciousness of Him who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. And we most humbly beseech thee, not only to bless us in our own souls, but to make us also a blessing to the souls of others. Grant that whatever influence or talents we may possess, may all be consecrated to thy service. Employ us as thine honoured instruments in putting down all those causes of offence whereby many are entangled or defiled, or stumbled or made weak. And may it please thee to look down in tender compassion upon such as are of a feeble mind. Do thou, the God of all grace, effectually comfort and strengthen us. Oh that our hearts may be right in thy sight. May we never consent to the evil which we do, but strive and protest against it with our latest breath. And if, at any time, through our sins and wickedness, the adversary gets an advantage over us, and is ready to persecute us and take us, when there is none to deliver us, Lord, do thou undertake for us. Give us not over a prey to his teeth. In our greatest extremity may we look again to thy holy temple, and trust in thy tender mercy for ever and ever. In the multitude of the sorrows that we have in our hearts, let thy comforts refresh our soul. May we find with adoring wonder that our extremity is thy opportunity; that thou art a very present help in trouble, and that there is deliverance for all them that put their trust in thee. And, finally, do thou mercifully grant that all the dispensations of thy providence, and all the events which befall us in this world of sin and sorrow, may be overruled to the furtherance of our everlasting salvation. All this we ask, pleading the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, our only Lord and Saviour.

LECTURE XVI.

COMMUNICATIONS BY THE WAY.

I'LL bless the Lord from day to day ;
How good are all his ways !
Ye humble souls that use to pray,
Come help my lips to praise.

Sing to the honour of his name,
How a poor sufferer cried,
Nor was his hope exposed to shame,
Nor was his suit denied.

Oh sinners, come and taste his love,
Come, learn his pleasant ways,
And let your own experience prove
The sweetness of his grace.

He bids his angels pitch their tents
Round where his children dwell ;
What ills their heavenly care prevents,
No earthly tongue can tell.

Oh love the Lord, ye saints of his ;
His eye regards the just ;
How richly blest their portion is
Who make the Lord their trust !

GALATIANS VI. 2.

BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS, AND SO FULFIL THE LAW OF CHRIST.

WE knew not to what extent we ought to love one another, until Christ showed us, by laying down his life for us. We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren, and to love one another, even as Christ has loved us. Oh, what kind sympathy, and ready help, and loving admonitions should we give one to

another, if the same mind were in us which was also in Christ Jesus, and if we more constantly considered him who left us an example that we should follow his steps. His special command, as well as his constant example, requires this spirit of love to be seen in all his disciples. Such a spirit as this is the badge of discipleship before the eyes of men which he will not dispense with. It is the witness to ourselves that we are indeed the children of God. It is the royal law, the special and the new commandment sent forth from the King: "A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another." The law of Christ therefore is evidently that pure and fervent spirit of love which teaches us to feel for the sorrows and distresses of our brethren, and to do all we can to alleviate them. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."

We have to consider in this Lecture—

I. The friendly communications of the pilgrims, before they set out from the house of Gaius.

II. Their communications by the way.

I. We begin with their communications before they left the house of Gaius. Soon after Feeblemind had arrived, they were informed that a pilgrim called Notright had been struck dead by a thunderbolt at a little distance. This man had been in the company of Feeblemind when he fell into the hands of Slaygood. One had been taken to experience a marvellous deliverance; the other had escaped for a little season, only to come to that fearful end. All the pilgrims were much affected at this occurrence. Before they set out on their journey, Gaius made them a feast; and when the reckoning was called

for, he would take nothing. He said he would wait for the payment of what he had expended upon them, until the return of the Good Samaritan, and then he knew well that he should be abundantly recompensed. To this the conductor of the pilgrims replied : "Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers ; which have borne witness of thy charity before the church : whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well." Then did Gaius take leave of them all, paying special attention to Feeble-mind, and giving something to him for his support by the way, which he gave not to the others. But notwithstanding this, the poor man, as soon as they were out of the door was for lingering behind. He said he could not keep up with the rest—that he should only be a burden to them—that his fears and scruples would only retard and distress the whole party ; and that it would be much better for him and for them that he should stay behind, and get on as he could by himself. But the faithful guide would by no means consent to this. In the spirit of a true conductor of pilgrims to the Celestial City, he said, "I have received a special charge to comfort the feeble-minded and to support the weak. You must needs go along with us : we will lend you our help : we will deny ourselves of some things which are even lawful for your sake. In short, we will be made all things to you, rather than you shall be left behind." As they were thus conversing, there came up a lame pilgrim with crutches, whose name was Ready-to-halt. Here was a suitable companion for Feeble-mind, and being so matched he was now content to fall in the train with the rest of the pilgrims ; for the wise and considerate guide was as unwilling for

the lame to be turned out of the way as for the weak to be unsupported, or the feeble-minded to remain uncomforted. So forward they all proceeded, properly arranged, in the direction of the Celestial City.

Dear brethren, what a touching example is here held up for our imitation ; and how much important instruction is hid under the veil of this simple narrative ! Let us be warned by the end of Not-right, directed by the charity of Gaius, and instructed by the forbearance of Greatheart.

1. A man who makes a profession of religion while his heart is not right in the sight of God, may for the present escape many of the dangers in which the godly are involved ; but oh, think how suddenly he must consume and perish and come to a fearful end. To be suddenly struck dead by a flash of lightning on the road may give us some idea of the terrible end of the hypocrite and the dissembler with God. Let us not think that any providential mercies which we may have received can prove that all is well, if we are in nowise possessed of a penitent heart and a lively faith. Let us often pray earnestly : " Examine me, O Lord, and prove me ; try my heart and my reins." We, none of us, are right, except as we possess a broken and a contrite heart, a readiness of mind to embrace the gospel of salvation, and a sincere desire to do all the will of God. Oh let us remember the solemn admonition which speaketh to us : " Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish by the way."

2. Again, let us be directed by the charity of Gaius. He had real pleasure in doing good, hoping for nothing again. In any way that he could, to be a fellow-helper to the truth, was the joy and rejoicing

of his heart. But though in this present life he looked for no acknowledgment of the kindness which he showed to the people of God, with the eye of faith he looked forward to the life of the world to come, and he had respect to the recompense of reward. Every afflicted or needy Christian whom he was to succour or relieve appeared to have been especially committed to him by the Saviour himself, who said, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Oh let us remember that in a little while, he who shall come, will come, and bring his reward with him. How unspeakably happy it will be for us, in that day, to be found looking for his appearing; to have it then clearly shown that we have denied ourselves for him, and for his cause—that we have sought his glory in all our doings—that we have loved and befriended his people, out of love to him—that we have given credit to his express declarations: "Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me. They cannot recompense thee, but thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

3. Once more, let us all be instructed by the forbearance of Greatheart. This mighty man of valour, who was bold as a lion in the face of danger, who knew no fear, and who had conquered and slain so many giants, was meek and submissive as a little child, and gentle and yielding as a lamb, when he had to do with the feeble and weak and lame among the Lord's flock. He united, in an eminent degree, the apparently opposite virtues of courage and tenderness. He was a true shepherd, who had imbibed much of the spirit of the Chief Shepherd himself.

He could appeal to his Lord and Master, and say,

“Is there a lamb in all thy flock
I would disdain to feed ?
Is there a foe, before whose face
Thy cause I'd fear to plead ?”

How kind he was to the little children, taking them in his arms when they were panting up the hill of Difficulty ! How unwilling he was to let poor Feeble-minded go uncomforted ! With what real pleasure he took the lame and infirm man that was ready to halt, under his care and protection ! He positively declared that sooner than let these be left behind, he would make any sacrifice that was lawful for him to make. He would deny himself of many comforts and advantages which, with all good conscience, he could have enjoyed, only lest he should stumble or offend his weak brother. And in this, my brethren, as much as in any thing, is manifested both the reality and the strength of saving grace in a believer's heart. We never expect to see true religion flourish in this place, until there is a more loving, forbearing, self-denying spirit poured down upon us. We never expect to see our churches crowded every Sunday, and new communicants pressing forward to the Lord's table, until we learn to be more compassionate and more considerate for others ; until it is evident to all around that we love one another, with a pure heart, fervently ; until we see every one seeking not his own but another's welfare. “Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.” Oh let us recollect that the Christian's true motto is, “None of us liveth to himself, and none of us dieth to himself.” Let us diligently seek and earnestly pray, that we may none of us put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall,

in his brother's way. It is not Christian liberty that will concede nothing to the prejudices and mistakes and infirmities of others. "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let us every one please his neighbour for his good to edification; for even Christ pleased not himself. Only let such a spirit as this be poured upon us, and constantly shown, and then how rapidly will the little company increase among us that are really travelling to the Celestial City! Many that are ignorant and out of the way, when they see the fervent charity that knits us together, will seek our company. First one and then another will come and say, "We will go with you, for we perceive that God is with you of a truth."

II. It is time for us now to pass on, and consider the communications of our pilgrims by the way. It was proposed by one of the elders to the guide, "Now we are upon the road, tell us something profitable of those who have gone on pilgrimage before us." Upon this they began to discourse about Christian and Faithful, their various trials and adversaries, and the different characters that they had encountered. The skilful guide pointed out how different was the experience of Faithful from that of Christian, both in the Valley of Humiliation and in the Region of Darkness. Faithful had no desperate encounter with the terrible foe who had set so furiously upon Christian; neither had he to contend with any of the dismaying objects in the Region of Darkness, which had proved so extremely trying to the other. Faithful, however, it was observed, had

not been without his temptations, although they had been entirely of a different kind. The temptations of Christian had been to fulfil the desires of the mind, while Faithful had been more enticed to those of the flesh. One had been tempted to pride, unbelief and apostasy; the other to sensuality, worldliness and fear of man. The notable character of Talkative was also referred to by our pilgrims as they journeyed on. His confident folly was remarked, and deep regret expressed that many should follow his pernicious ways. He had almost, with his good words and fair speeches, deceived Faithful, until Christian, who knew the man's private character, suggested the proper method for exposing his hypocrisy. Next they talked over the visit of Evangelist to Christian and Faithful, to warn them of the treatment they were to expect in Vanity Fair. They had now arrived at the place where that meeting had been. It was observed, that although it was a hard lesson which he had to teach them, he had given them the most seasonable encouragement, to prepare them for that which was coming. The valiant spirit manifested by those two noble pilgrims in the town of Vanity was highly applauded. It was confessed that they were both lion-like men, who had set their faces like a flint to the Celestial City; and no suffering, however great, no adversary, however powerful, could turn them away from it. It was remembered, to their honour, how undaunted they had stood before the wicked judge; and how bravely Faithful had sealed his testimony to the truth with his blood. Neither did he suffer in vain. Hopeful and others had sprung forth to profess the truth for which the martyr had suffered. And, lastly, another character was discussed whom Christian had met after he had

got through the town of Vanity. This was none other than Byends. His character was summed up, and told with great plainness and decision, for the warning and instruction of the pilgrims. He was declared to be a downright hypocrite; one that would be religious whichever way the world went; but so cunning that he would be sure never to lose or suffer for it. He had his mode of religion for every fresh occasion. He would turn and change from opinion to opinion; yea, and plead for doing so too. But a religion like this is the same as a fortune obtained by fraud or falsehood, or any dishonest means. For a little while it may amuse and gratify him that has it; but "the end thereof shall not be blessed." As far as I could learn, said the faithful instructor, he came to an ill end, after all his fine-spun calculations, and the crooked and winding paths which he pursued to obtain that upon which he had set his heart. Nor did I hear that any of his children were ever of any esteem with those that walk uprightly.

Here let us pause for the present. These friendly discussions of the pilgrims by the way may all be very useful to us as we proceed forward in the right path. If we properly consider them, they will bring us on our journey after a godly sort. We should not always pursue in silence the heavenly path. While we are on the road, we should endeavour to converse on profitable subjects with our fellow-travellers. The peculiar trials, or the eminent graces of some who have gone on the ways of Zion before us, will often furnish us with a suitable subject. How can we ever want a profitable subject, if only our hearts are right with God, and our faces are indeed set to the better land? All the experience of

the people of God that is recorded in the Bible, is written for our learning and our admonition. We should avoid their errors, imitate their graces, and glorify God on their behalf. When we recollect how very different was the experience of Christian and Faithful over the same part of the road to Zion, we may all learn a most important lesson. It is not necessary for all true Christians to be tried and tempted and buffeted alike. There are, it is true, some things necessary, things which accompany salvation, and which are absolutely indispensable. We cannot be true pilgrims without a sense of our guilt and danger, an application to Christ to save us, and a real striving against sin. But wherever these are truly found, we need not write bitter things against ourselves, and conclude that we have neither part nor lot in the matter, because our convictions have not been so distressing, nor our conflicts so severe, nor our enjoyments so bright, as those of other Christians. If we know not the depths of Satan, and are kept in happy ignorance of the distressing and harassing conflicts with which some have been tried, let us be thankful rather than otherwise on this account. Terrible conflicts and distressing temptations are nowhere insisted upon in the Bible as essential to prove the reality of a work of grace in our hearts. Our Lord has taught us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." If, therefore, we are only subject to those temptations which are common to men, let us be thankful; and earnestly seek for grace and strength to withstand them properly. Satan knows our peculiar weakness, and he will be most likely to adapt his bait to our besetting infirmity. Let us be especially on our guard, where we know we are most open to the assaults of the enemy. And

let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth most easily beset us.

Again, since so many mistake the garb and language for the spirit of a Christian, let us take great heed to ourselves that we do not fall into so fatal an error. Let us never be satisfied with the talk of the lips. Let us seriously think how little it will avail us in the great day of account, to have known well and talked much about the great truths of the gospel, if our hearts were not affected, nor our lives at all regulated by what we knew and what we said. It is by doing the will of his Lord that the true disciple is distinguished from the wicked and slothful servant.

We may learn from the seasonable visit of Evangelist to the two pilgrims, just before their severe trials in the town of Vanity, how graciously the Lord prepares his people for approaching trials. As long as we resolutely adhere to the right way, we may humbly depend upon all needful supplies of light and strength for what is before us. If our trials are to abound, our comfort and strength shall abound also. And whether Satan is to buffet us, the world to allure us, or indwelling sin is to harass us sorely, all shall be well, if we only obtain the gracious declaration, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

It is very animating to recall to mind the eminent grace which has rested upon numbers that swell the noble army of martyrs. When we see how bravely they faced the most appalling dangers, and how signally they triumphed over death in its most awful form, we should remember that he who supported them is able also to support us. And he will support us, if only we call upon his name, and put our

trust in his help. Daniel stopped the mouths of the lions, and no manner of harm was found upon him, because he believed in his God. And no adversary shall be able to harm us, or to prevail against us, if only we trust in the Lord, and call upon him in the day of trouble. We may not only be kept in peace ourselves in the time of trouble, but if we suffer as Christians, and manifest in the fiery trial the true spirit of him that was crucified, we may be the happy instruments of bringing others to seek after God that their souls may live.

Finally, let us have it always deeply imprinted upon our minds, that if we would finish our course with joy, we must be men of another spirit than Byends or any of his children. Our object in professing religion must be, not to please men, or to gain a name, or to pass for a religious person, but to flee from the wrath to come, to secure an interest in the Saviour of sinners, and so to walk and have our conversation in the world that we may glorify God and benefit our fellow-sinners. If this be our object, and we resolutely pursue it, we shall surely succeed in it; and bright and blessed will be the success. But if we are merely time-servers, and belong to the family of Byends, our ruin and miserable destruction are inevitable at the last. Neither Byends nor any of his family ever came to a good end. Let us pray earnestly that our hearts may be right in the sight of God; that integrity and uprightness may always preserve us. Then will our heart be sound in the divine statutes, and we shall never be ashamed.

HYMN.

YE soldiers and servants that stand
 Arrayed in the garb of your Lord,
 He issues his royal command ;
 Give ear to the voice of his word !

My people, he says, in my love
 I suffered that you might be free ;
 And thus I command you to prove
 Your love and attachment to me.

My wonderful kindness to you,
 Is left as a model to teach
 What all my disciples must show,
 In kindness to all and to each.

All people by this shall discern,
 And own you disciples of mine,
 When love to each other shall burn
 With fervour both bright and divine.

By this shall you know, and be sure,
 That truly you've passed from the dead,
 If love to each other be pure,
 And in you abundantly shed.

By this the wide world shall I gain,
 And all to my sceptre shall run,
 When love in my people shall reign,
 And all my disciples are one.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, thou hast charged us in thy holy word, to bear one another's burdens, and to love one another with a pure heart fervently : We humbly beseech thee, pour down upon us the spirit of truth and unity and godly concord. Oh may we be effectually warned by thy judgments upon the ungodly, who consume and perish and come to a fearful end. May our hearts be right with thee ; and may we walk in the even paths of integrity and uprightness, lest we kindle thy righteous displeasure, and perish from the way. May we have grace to do faithfully all things whatever

we do. May we do good, and hope for nothing again in this present evil world; but trust in thy sure word, and have respect to the recompense of reward which thou hast promised to thy people in the day of thine appearing. Give us grace to walk with all meekness and forbearance towards all men. May we learn of Him who pleased not himself; denying ourselves even lawful things for the sake of others; and as far as we lawfully may, becoming all things to all men, that by all means we may save some. Lord, grant, that as we pursue our way to the heavenly Zion, we may speak often one to another; and may all our communications be for our mutual comfort and profit and edification. And while so engaged, do thou thyself, gracious Saviour, draw near unto us, and open our hearts to understand the Scriptures. Give us, we beseech thee, all things that accompany salvation; and save and deliver us from every trial and every conflict which is too hard for us. Suffer us not to be tempted above measure; and give us such supplies of grace and strength as may support us under every trial, and carry us safe through every temptation. May we remember that thou requirest truth in the inward parts, and never mistake the language or the dress of religion for the inward principles of saving grace. Give us, we beseech thee, special supplies of grace for every special season of need. We bless thy holy name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beseeching thee to give us grace so to follow their good example, that we, together with them, may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom. And finally, we pray that integrity and uprightness may always preserve us, and that we may never turn aside to any crooked path. Oh let our hearts be sound in thy testimonies, that we be not ashamed. And now, blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

LECTURE XVII.

MNASON'S HOUSE.

THE man is ever blest,
Who shuns the sinners' ways,
Among their councils never stands,
Nor takes the scorner's place.
But makes the law of God
His study and delight,
Amidst the labours of the day
And watches of the night.
He like a tree shall thrive,
With waters near the root;
Fresh as the leaf his name shall live;
His works are heavenly fruit.
Not so the ungodly race;
They no such blessings find;
Their hopes shall flee like empty chaff
Before the driving wind.
How will they bear to stand
Before that judgment-seat,
Where all the saints at Christ's right hand
In full assembly meet?
He knows, and he approves
The way the righteous go;
But sinners and their works shall meet
A dreadful overthrow.

MATTHEW X. 11.

AND INTO WHATSOEVER CITY OR TOWN YE SHALL ENTER, INQUIRE WHO IN IT IS WORTHY; AND THERE ABIDE TILL YE GO THENCE.

THIS was part of our Saviour's instruction to the twelve disciples, when he first sent them forth to preach the gospel of the kingdom among the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He had freely fur-

nished them with all needful gifts, which they were as freely to impart. He had directed them where to go; and had charged them with the message they were to deliver. In addition to this he gave them a most wise and important direction as to the stations they were to select and the individuals with whom they were to remain, while employed on this embassy. They were not to go promiscuously into any house that might first present itself when they came to a new place; neither were they to go from house to house. But having made inquiry as to those individuals who bore the best characters, and consequently would be most disposed to aid and encourage them in their important work, there they were to enter, and there they were to abide. Though this direction applies more especially to missionaries and evangelists, all true pilgrims to the Celestial City should endeavour to act in the spirit of it. As we journey through this worldly wilderness, and are from time to time thrown into different society, we should endeavour to find out who is worthy—who are the people that really fear God, and, in preference to all others, these we should choose for our companions; with these we should associate and with these we should abide. The stay of our pilgrims in the house of Mnason, an old disciple, will form the subject of the present lecture. We have to notice,

I. Their reception into this house.

II. The company and conversation that engaged them there; and

III. An adventure that took place before they departed.

I. We begin with their reception into the house of this old disciple. By this time they were come within sight of the town of Vanity, where the fair is kept. Upon this they began seriously to cast in their minds how they might pass, with the greatest safety, through this dangerous place. But their experienced conductor informed them, that he was acquainted with a worthy person, one Mnason, an old disciple, and proposed that they should all turn into his house and there abide. This proposal was readily agreed to by the whole party. The guide therefore conducted them at once to the habitation where he knew the son of peace to reside. His well-known voice was recognised directly at Mnason's door. It was therefore opened immediately; and the old disciple received these pilgrims into his house joyfully. He bade them all welcome, and said, "Whatever you want, do but ask, and we will do what we can to get it for you." His house, like his heart, was very large, hence he made no scruple or difficulty in accommodating so many travellers. So he led them to their respective places, and assembled them in a very fair room where they might sup together, and remain until it was time to rest.

Here let us pause a moment, to admire alike the prudence of the guide and the kindness of the old disciple. And let us try to imitate what we are compelled to admire. Parents and ministers, and all who are called by providence in any way to be the guides of others, should do all they can to preserve their charge, and especially the young, from scenes of vanity and improper companions. We must all, soon or late, more or less, come in contact with this wicked and deceitful world. We cannot get from our native place to the Celestial City with-

out touching at the town of Vanity. To avoid it altogether, we must needs go out of the world. But oh, what a blessed shelter it is for the young and inexperienced, when they come directly to be exposed to the snares and dangers of this wicked world, and when all its pomps and vanities will be spread before them—what an advantage it is to be under the friendly care and the watchful eye of an old disciple! How many snares and dangers will they avoid! How much bitter suffering—present suffering and future suffering—may it prevent if they are associated only with such as fear God! Let young people constantly recollect the earnest admonition: “Go not in the way of evil men; avoid it; pass not by it; turn from it and pass away.” There is so much vanity and natural depravity bound up in all our hearts, that we cannot pass unhurt through scenes of frivolity and sin. “Evil communications corrupt good manners.” True courage is displayed here by flight. Positive happiness is secured by a resolute withdrawal of the foot from the downward path of the wicked. “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” If you associate in early life with such as fear God, and learn to partake of their spirit, you will not only be kept from the corruption that is in the world through lust, but you will have no taste for the vain amusements and worldly pleasures that glitter so brightly in the eyes of others. These things will not attract you. You will breathe a purer air and aspire after nobler enjoyments. Young people, be companions of such as fear God, and determine not to know a wicked person. And parents, in all your planning and contriving for

your children, ever keep their everlasting interests in view ; and do all that in you lies to restrain and withdraw them from the pomps and vanities of this wicked world.

2. But we have to remark also, that the kindness of the old disciple in receiving these pilgrims is very exemplary. How readily did he admit them into his friendly habitation ; and how glad was he to give them all the shelter and all the supplies which his house could afford ! We should all remember that among real Christians, whatever peculiar advantages they possess are so many talents committed to their trust, and that for these they must give an account. There must be a trading with every talent. Age and experience, rank and wealth, abilities and influence over others, should all be regarded as the goods of our Lord, which he has divided out to us according to his own pleasure ; and we should be very anxious to turn them all to a good account. There is no person, however mean or poor, in whose heart the grace of God exists, who may not do something to promote the Saviour's glory, or in some way assist and benefit those whom he condescends to call his brethren. "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." We must try to reflect, in all our dealings with others, something of the kindness and forbearance and mercy which have been extended to ourselves. "Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God." We should realize the bond of brotherhood which unites us to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, using hospitality one to another without grudging. The hope of doing a kind service to some, who happily may be found, in the great day of account, to

belong to Christ, should reconcile us to much painful and discouraging experience that we meet, in our attempt to find out such as belong to the generation of the upright. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

II. We proceed to notice the company and conversation that engaged our pilgrims in the house of the old disciple. Inquiry was made by Father Honest if the number of disciples were increased in that neighbourhood. To this Mnason replied, "We have a few; but few indeed they are when compared with those on the other side." He proceeded to verify his words, and sent to invite a few of the strangers and pilgrims that were scattered in those regions, to meet the guests who had just arrived at his house. Grace, his daughter, took the message, and a goodly sample they were of choice pilgrims who came immediately at the invitation. Contrite, Holy-man, Love-saint, Dare-not-lie, and Penitent were the friends that assembled to meet our pilgrims in the house of the old disciple. They were all filled with the sincerest joy at the sight of the whole of Christian's family walking in the steps of him that had gone before, and thus far on their journey to meet him in the Celestial City. As they all sat and conversed together, Contrite told them how extremely difficult it was to maintain the heart and the spirit of a pilgrim, abiding as he and his fellows did, amid the hurry and bustle of that great town. He told them, moreover, that the town's-people were much more moderate than they formerly were. Since the martyrdom of Faithful, a more tolerant spirit had been diffused among the people.

They were now quite ashamed to burn pilgrims; suffering them to walk abroad without molestation, and in some parts of the town it was quite fashionable to be accounted a pilgrim. But while this was the case, all the frivolities and the dissipation of the fair were kept up with as much earnestness as ever; and what was very surprising, not a few were seen in the garb and habit of pilgrims, as intent and busy at the fair as any of the rest! In their turn, Mnason and his friends were edified and encouraged by a particular relation of all the travail, and all the deliverances, that had been experienced by our pilgrims, from Christiana's first setting out, to the deliverance of Feeblemind from the hands of the giant. Each of the friends of Mnason made a wise and edifying remark, which was suggested by what they heard. Holy-man observed how essential it is for a pilgrim to have a courageous heart and an unspotted life. Without courage he faints by the way; and without holiness he makes his profession to be abhorred. Love-saint trusted that the little company then assembled were saints indeed. His heart was drawn out to them all; but he was compelled to confess the strange inconsistencies of many who appeared on the ways of Zion. Dare-not-lie confirmed this painful testimony. "It is true," he said, "they have neither the pilgrim's weed nor the pilgrim's courage, and greatly do they disparage the Lord of the way by their uneven walk." Penitent said, with a weeping eye, how much they all ought to grieve and lament over such things, as he greatly feared that true pilgrims would be sadly impeded in their progress, and many be stumbled and offended, until such spots and blemishes as these were removed. Thus they sat talking together, and re-

mained for some time under the hospitable roof of Mnason.

Let us learn from this the kind of company we should choose, and the conversation in which we should delight. The Lord generally has his secret ones, even in those places which are most unfavourable to true religion. Those large and busy towns, where the greater part are engaged in business and pleasure, dissipation and vanity, generally contain a faithful remnant, who are men of another spirit. When we consider how sinners and lovers of pleasure strengthen themselves in vanity and ungodliness by joining hand to hand, we cannot help regretting deeply, that they who fear the Lord so seldom speak one to another; and that they do not try more frequently to edify one another. Much experience and grace are requisite to bring the people of the Lord together, and to let their meeting be for their mutual comfort and edification. If this be done in simplicity and godly sincerity, all believers, even the most eminent, are comforted and established and instructed, by listening to the relation of the Lord's dealings with other Christians. The work of grace in a sinner's heart is the special work of God; and it is deeply affecting to witness the manner in which the Spirit and providence of God concur in making all things work together for the good of His people. All the works of the Lord are so done that they demand our devoutest consideration. And among these works, we must not overlook the work of grace, and the manner in which it is carried on. It is probable that in the household of faith, every real Christian excels in some particular grace. "Every one hath his proper gift." Though the seed of every Christian grace is sown in

every believing heart, some of these graces advance to a much greater state of maturity than others. Some excel in true sanctification of heart; some in their abundant love to the people of God; some in their undeviating regard for truth and uprightness; and some in genuine contrition and penitent sorrow for sin. Hence, it is extremely profitable to hear them deliver their sentiments and express their views upon any subject which lies near their hearts. One will remind us how necessary it is for us constantly to maintain good courage and an unspotted life, if we would not disgrace our profession in the eyes of others, and be disappointed ourselves of salvation at the last. Another will suggest how ready we should be to hold out the right hand of fellowship one to another, without thinking evil of each other; at the same time, he will by no means recommend us to shut our eyes to the real sins and inconsistencies of professors. There is a happy medium to be observed between conniving at sin, and loving to find fault for the sake of speaking. The lover of truth and uprightness will set before us in the most convincing light, the fearful manner in which the weak are stumbled, and sinners hardened and confirmed in their prejudices, by the loose and careless walk of such as profess subjection to the gospel of Christ; and the man who especially excels in a penitent, contrite frame of spirit—that spirit which is so highly prized by the Lord himself—this man will lead us to the gracious exercise of sighing for all the abominations that are done in the sanctuary, among those who ought to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. As we imbibe such an excellent spirit, we shall each be able to say: “Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because men keep not thy law.”

III. We proceed, lastly, to notice a memorable adventure that occurred before our pilgrims left the house of Mnason. While they were here, there came a monster out of the woods, and slew many of the people of the town. It was also a terrible enemy to little children. It would carry them away into the dark woods, and there, not indeed kill them, or eat them, but teach them to suck its whelps. No man in the town durst so much as face this monster, but every one fled when they heard the noise of its approach. It seemed to belong, as geologists would speak, to some of the extinct species of monsters that prowled over the earth in its rude and chaotic form; for no one living creature, either upon the earth or in the ocean, could be found like it. And yet it could not be called a nondescript; for in a divinely inspired and ancient record, the last section of the pilgrim's guide-book to the Celestial City, there is found a complete drawing of this monster, with a particular account of its rise and continuance, the cruelties committed by it, and the manner of its final destruction. It had seven heads and ten horns. The body of it was like a leopard, the feet were as the feet of a bear, the mouth was as the mouth of a lion, and it had eyes as a man. A great red dragon gave it its power and seat, and its great authority. This was the monster that began again to practise its cruelties, while our pilgrims remained with the old disciple. It is true, one of its heads had been wounded, but it was not so soon to be beaten. It was directed by a woman, and terrible was the havoc which it made of children. It propounded its terms and conditions wherever it came, and such as loved their lives more than their souls accepted of those conditions. Now several of the

excellent pilgrims, who met from time to time in the house of Mnason, could not bear to sit still and do nothing, while this terrible monster was suffered in this manner to practise and to prosper without molestation. They therefore engaged openly to attack it, if happily they might deliver the town from such a frightful plague. There was a little band drawn up to go forth on this arduous expedition. Greatheart was appointed captain; and well was he supported by Contrite, Holyman, Dare-not-lie and Penitent. These were the men who willingly offered themselves to make war with the beast. They took their weapons, and out they set on the glorious enterprise. At first the monster was very rampant, and regarded these champions with great disdain. For mortal strength and human skill and ingenuity are no match for him. He cares nothing for argument or reason, evidence or fact.

“Alas! Leviathan is not so tamed.”

“He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood. The arrow cannot make him flee: sling-stones are turned with him into stubble. Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.” Nothing but the great and strong sword of the celestial King, wielded by his own almighty Spirit, is able to approach him. Our champions were all furnished with this victorious weapon, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; and they were all endowed with a measure of spiritual unction. This the monster soon perceived and was compelled to retreat. Again and again, however, did he return after he had been beaten, to renew his attacks, and to practise his designs upon the children and the people of the town. But the champions who had

engaged in this warfare were not to be intimidated. They watched the monster so closely, and assailed him so fiercely, that he became not only wounded but lame, and was unable for a long time to carry off any more children from those regions. It was verily believed by many, that he would never be able to lift up his strength as before, and that he must certainly die from the effects of the wounds which he then received. This adventure obtained for Greatheart and his fellows high commendations in the town, and for this reason the pilgrims he was conducting were little molested in that place. It is true, however, that some of the baser sort, who appeared to be without eyes and without understanding, thought in their hearts that little thanks were due to Greatheart and his men-at-arms for what they had done.

Here let us pause to receive instruction. The second part of the "Pilgrim's Progress" was written soon after the Revolution of 1688, when the popish king, James II. was compelled to abdicate the British crown, and the Protestant religion, under William III., became more firmly established in England than ever. The desperate efforts which were made under James II., for the re-establishment of Popery in England, formed a great crisis in the cause of Protestant truth. Every effort was made to extinguish the glorious light of the Reformation. With a boldness which it had never dared to show in England since the days of the bigoted Mary, Popery came forth out of the hiding-place into which it had been driven. Many nominal Protestants were drawn over to the side of superstition, and the most daring attempts were made to have Popish teachers and instructors obtruded into families and

schools and colleges, that the rising generation might be trained up in ignorance of the gospel, and might imbibe from their youth the poison of Popery. But true-hearted Protestants united together, and by the preaching and writing, and exposition of Scripture, they obtained a glorious victory over these insidious attempts. Popery received another blow in England, from which it was thought it would never again revive in that realm. Protestantism was interwoven in the constitution, and became part and parcel of the law of the land, so that none but a Protestant is qualified to succeed to the crown of England. Blind and perverse indeed were those who did not reverence the instruments by whose zeal and faithfulness and labours this great victory was obtained !

What then shall we say now to those pretended Protestants who speak evil alike both of the Reformation and of the Revolution ? The activity of the Papal church in the present day, and the various attempts which are making, in the most opposite directions, to reinstate it in its former dominion, may well cause the heart of every true and considerate Protestant to quail. Education has ever been one of the principal means by which this monstrous system has been propagated. Let schools and colleges be under the direction of Papal priests, and what can we expect will be the result ? How powerfully has this engine been plied in the present day ! Oh that all who fear God would unite together against the common enemy ! The monster has not died by reason of the wounds which he received at the Reformation or at the Revolution. Nay, as if his deadly wound were healed, again he is lifting up his head, his many heads, and going forth to deceive and to destroy. Oh the multitudes that are won-

dering after the reviving power of the church of Rome, and saying, "Who is like unto it?" "Who is able to make war against it?" Let us learn who are the champions and what are the weapons which alone can prevail over this terrible foe. It is true, all faithful ministers, mighty in the Scriptures, and valiant for the truth, should take the lead in this warfare; these should be the Greathearts of the expedition. But all whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life; all that have been taught the vital truths of the gospel by the effectual teaching of the Holy Spirit, are well able to check the encroachments of Popery and compel it to retreat. Every one that possesses a broken and contrite heart; every holy and truly sanctified man; every lover of truth; every genuine penitent, who knows experimentally the efficacy of the one oblation of Christ; these are the people who are never deceived either by the beast or the image of the beast. These are the men who alone are able to make war against it. And why? Because they go forth with no other weapon than the naked sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. This is the weapon which Popery never could, and never will be able to withstand! And let us all watch and pray, and be looking for the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ. He has reserved to himself the glory of giving the finishing stroke to this long-lasting adversary of his Church. "This is that Wicked One, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

HYMN.

God of grace and God of love,
Send thy blessing from above;
Let our hearts and houses be
Habitations meet for thee.

Heavenly Father, give us grace
How to train the rising race;
May they fear thee from their youth,
Always choose the way of truth.

May we love thy people, Lord,
Friendly aid to them afford,
With them join in counsel sweet,
Find thy presence when we meet.

When we sit, and when we walk,
Of thy mercies may we talk.
And with kindling hearts confess,
Christ is here, and that to bless.

Safe from error's winding ways,
Safe from falsehood's dreadful maze,
May thy truth both make us free,
And our shield and buckler be.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, thou art the God of peace to all thy believing people. Thou art in Christ, reconciling the world unto thyself. Oh, let thy peace, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ, and let the son of peace constantly abide in all our habitations! We humbly ask for thy blessing on the younger members of our families. Give us grace to act towards them with all wisdom and prudence. May we plan and contrive to have them sheltered from the vanities and temptations and pollutions that surround them. Oh, keep them from the evil that is in the world! If sinners entice them, may they not consent. May they be companions of them that fear thee, and walk in the way of good men. And give us all, we beseech thee, thy heavenly grace, to lay ourselves out for thy service. As we have opportunity, may we do good unto all men, and especially unto

them who are of the household of faith. May we not be forgetful to entertain strangers, remembering that thereby some have entertained angels unawares. May it please thee, gracious Father, to sanctify and bless all our intercourse with each other. May our talk be of thy truth, and of thy loving-kindness. Increase in us the manifold gifts of thy Holy Spirit; and may we exercise ourselves unto godliness; remembering that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. Oh, grant that, while we are in the world, we may endeavour to be useful! Preserve us from all the errors and delusions of the day in which we live, and may we not only be preserved from error, but may we be valiant for the truth. May it please thee to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived. Oh, that numbers, in every place, may come out of Babylon, which is to be destroyed! May they get the victory over the beast, and his image, and his mark, and the number of his name. Arise, O Lord, and plead thine own cause; let not the man of sin prevail. Save our beloved country from the incursions of Popery, in all its subtle disguises. May the faith, which we have received from our fathers, and which rests on thy revealed word, be preserved to us, and handed down to those who shall come after us. Disappoint the designs of all who have evil will at Zion. Let thy holy word mightily grow and prevail among us. Hear us, O Lord, hear us, and forgive us all our individual sins, all our family offences, and all our national provocations, through Jesus Christ our only Mediator and Redeemer.

LECTURE XVIII.

DESPAIR SLAIN, AND THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS GAINED.

WHAT shall I render to my God
For all his kindness shown?
My feet shall visit thine abode,
My songs address thy throne,
Among the saints that fill thy house
My offerings shall be paid;
There shall my zeal perform the vows
My soul in anguish made.
How much is mercy thy delight,
Thou ever blessed God!
How dear thy servants in thy sight!
How precious is their blood!
How happy all thy servants are!
How great thy grace to me!
My life which thou hast made thy care,
Lord, I devote to thee.
Now I am thine, for ever thine,
Nor shall my purpose move;
Thy hand has loosed my bonds of pain
And bound me with thy love.
Here in thy courts I leave my vow,
And thy rich grace record;
Witness, ye saints, who hear me now,
If I forsake the Lord.

PSALM LXXIV. 7.

THEY GO FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH.

It is a sure sign that the grace of God is really begun in our hearts, if we are making progress in the way everlasting. True believers wax stronger

and stronger, and go from strength unto strength. All that have rightly set out in the heavenly way, and look up in humble faith for renewed supplies of grace, are strengthened according to their day. He who has begun the good work engages to finish it. Thus they are upheld and preserved in all dangers and temptations; and they not only go from strength to strength, but they come safely to their journey's end, and unto the God of gods appeareth every one of them in Zion.

We shall find this precious truth illustrated as we consider the experience of our pilgrims after they left the house of Mnason.

I. We shall consider their progress to the Delectable Mountains, and then,

II. Their experience there.

I. We begin with their departure from the house of the old disciple. Very loving was the leave which they took of the friends they had found in this place. Those who had the most strength, adapted their pace to suit such as were weak and feeble. When they passed by the place where Faithful had been martyred, they glorified their King for the abundant grace which had there been shown by his suffering servant. They went safely by the hill of Lucre without any injury, and were warned by the monument which told them to beware of looking behind them. Thus they went forward until they arrived at the river which is on this side the Delectable Mountains. Great was their delight, and very pleasant their course, all along the banks of this river. The meanest and the feeblest of the company here walked securely, being committed to the especial

care and protection of one who will die before any that are under his care shall be lost. Thus they went safely until they arrived at the stile which led across By-path Meadow to Doubting Castle. Here they held a consultation, whether or not it might be lawful for the strongest of the party to make an attempt against the owner of this castle, and deliver any of the poor captives that might be detained in it. Upon this they soon determined. The strongest and most courageous of the party set forward on this expedition. Very successful did it prove. Despair was slain, his castle demolished, and two prisoners that were there confined, and almost starved to death, Despondency and Much-afraid, were set at liberty and taken under the protection of the pilgrims. Great was the joy of the whole company at the destruction of this terrible enemy to pilgrims, and at the demolition of this mournful hold, in which so many had undergone such bitter sufferings. They celebrated this event with music and dancing, and Feeble-mind and Ready-to-halt were scarcely able to set any bounds to their delight. It must, however, be carefully remembered, that although this dark mansion, Doubting Castle, was at this time demolished by these valiant champions, it had the wonderful property of springing up again in all its former strength. And although the giant Despair was slain, again and again does he revive—"out of the serpent's root comes forth the cockatrice"—so that no generation of pilgrims in any age are altogether free from his influence; neither may they ever consider that they have nothing to apprehend from his tyranny.

We may look back upon this part of our pilgrim's journey, and receive instruction. Did they part with

mutual expressions of love and good-will from Mnason and his companions? Few events in life so affectingly remind real Christians that they are strangers and pilgrims upon earth, as their separation, from time to time, from those with whom they have taken sweet counsel and walked to the house of God as friends. The feelings which are called into exercise on such occasions should not only remind us that this is not our rest, but should make us more earnestly aspire after our heavenly home in the New Jerusalem, where the communion of saints will be unspeakably sweeter than any thing which we have ever known of it upon earth, and where it will never have an end. Did the strong tarry for the weak, that they might journey in company to the Celestial City? Oh let us remember that we sin against Christ when we wound the conscience of any of his true, though weak, disciples! And let us consider that a self-denying spirit, a readiness to concede our own rights for the sake of others, is eminently the spirit of Christ and acceptable in his sight. Did they stop to glorify their King when they arrived at the memorial of the faithful martyr? This, let us remember, is the true and proper use to make of all the abundant grace which has ever rested upon the saints and servants of the Lord. We should consider that they shine only with a borrowed light; and instead of being carried away with admiration of the lantern which merely reflected the light, we should lift up our adoring thoughts to the boundless Source from whence the light which they exhibited was derived, and all the glory should be ascribed to him. Did they get safely by the hill Lucre without turning aside to it, while they only paused to read the

monument which was put up for their warning? If we are mercifully preserved from covetousness and worldly desires, it will only be as we seriously consider all the solemn warnings and affecting examples which are set before us in the Bible with reference to this snare. As we consider these, and pray earnestly to have our minds drawn to high and heavenly things, we shall pass on without any injury over those places which have proved so fatal to others. Did the least and feeblest of the party go safely as they approached the borders of the Delectable Mountains? Let us consider that there is no safety or security in any other way but the way of truth and obedience: and let us use every means in our power that all who belong to us may indeed be found in this blessed way. However frail, or ignorant, or inexperienced they may be, all who receive the truth in the love of it, and go forward in the path of obedience, shall be preserved and upheld in all dangers and necessities. They are under the special care and protection of Him who would sooner die than lose any thing of all that are committed to him? Did the pilgrims consult together, whether it were lawful for any of them to leave the high road, in order to put down a crying evil? Let us remember, that on no occasion whatever are we to do evil that good may come; but real Christians, who have a single eye to the glory of God, and an earnest desire to set forward the salvation of all men, are sometimes called to mix among scenes and company which are forbidden to others. If we go among people of the world, not to gratify ourselves, or to speak and act as they do, but with a real desire to speak to them a word in season, and to be the instrument of good to them—as we keep this design

in view, and labour to accomplish it, we are evidently in the path of duty ; but if we have no such design as this before us, when we go into the world, we have clearly wandered into a by-path, and our consciences will say to us on such occasions, "What doest thou here?" Were the strongest of the pilgrims permitted to demolish Doubting Castle, to kill Despair, and liberate some captives out of his hands? What a glorious enterprise is this, in which all the true followers of the Lord may engage ! By setting before men the gospel plan of salvation in all its fulness, and in all its freeness, we should endeavour to deliver them from their gloomy doubts and their desponding fears, and to make them acquainted with the glorious liberty of the children of God. But never let us suppose for a moment that Doubting Castle is so demolished, or Despair so slain, that we have no need to be on our guard during the remaining part of our pilgrimage. At one time we may have been let out of prison, and all our gloomy doubts may have been so entirely dispersed, as if the castle itself had been demolished and not one stone left upon another. The deep despair by which we were held may vanish away so entirely, as if the giant himself were slain and could never molest us again ; but, after all this, if we turn aside to the by-paths of inconsistency, or pursue the crooked ways of falsehood and sin, we shall soon find, to our cost, that the castle is still standing, in all its strength and all its gloom ; and that the giant is still living, with renewed malice and renewed instruments of torture, to plague and torment us. When doubt has fled, and hope has succeeded to despair, still we must be not high-minded, but fear ; still we must stand in awe and sin not.

II. We proceed now to consider the experience of the pilgrims at the Delectable Mountains. The faithful shepherds, who were feeding their flocks on these mountains when Christian and Hopeful passed that way, were engaged in the same delightful employment. Very joyfully did those shepherds welcome the whole company of pilgrims to those regions. It consisted, indeed, of various grades; but the shepherds said, "We have food for the weak as well as the strong. Our Prince has an eye to what is done to the least of these." Then did they especially invite and call by name Feeblemind, and the rest who, like him, had the greatest need of encouragement. This was very pleasant to the guide of the pilgrims, and he said, "I see this day that you are indeed true shepherds of my Lord, for you have not pushed those who are diseased with side nor shoulder, but have rather strewed their way into the palace with flowers." The food which the shepherds dealt out to the pilgrims was exactly that which was best adapted to the state and condition of each. Very excellent were the lessons which they taught our pilgrims.

1. The first was to show the power of faith. They led the pilgrims to a mountain called Mount Marvel. Here they beheld, at a distance, a man that tumbled the hills about with his words. This was to teach pilgrims how, by faith, to believe down, or to tumble out of their way whatever difficulties they should meet with.

2. The next lesson was to teach the impossibility of really injuring an upright man by defamation. They went up to a mountain called the Mount of Innocence. Here they saw one Godlyman, clothed in white, and two others, Prejudice and Illwill,



casting dirt upon him. But the dirt which was cast would not stick to the white garment, neither could it at all alter its appearance, for it always in a little while fell off, and the garment remained as white as ever. "So it is," the shepherds said, "with every godly person who walks uprightly. The wicked who hate his religion bring false charges against him, and try to cast him down from his excellency; but their labour is in vain. These charges cannot be fastened upon him. In a short time they fall to the ground; and eventually his righteousness shall break forth as the light, and his just dealing as the noon-day."

3. The next lesson was to show the blessed effects of charity. They were taken to the Mount of Charity. Here a man was cutting garments for the poor out of a bundle of cloth before him, and yet his bundle never grew less after all that he took away from it. This was to show that he who giveth to the poor shall not lack; that the waterer shall be watered; and that true charity brings the same blessing upon our substance that God sent upon the widow woman who fed his prophet. "The barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sent rain upon the earth."

4. The last lesson was to show the absolute necessity of a new nature. The pilgrims were taken to a place from whence they beheld two foolish persons engaged in the most unprofitable of all labour. They were washing an Ethiopian with an intention to make him white; but the more they washed him the blacker he was. Thus it is, our pilgrims were told by the shepherds, with all attempts which we make to render ourselves acceptable in the sight of God, while we neglect the great salvation of Christ,

and seek not the renewing of our hearts by the power of his Holy Spirit. Thus it was with the Pharisees, and so it shall be with all hypocrites.

How deeply important and how full of instruction are all these lessons to every one of us! May we all not only thoroughly understand their meaning, but may we know from experience their truth and reality.

All who are pastors after the Lord's own heart will be ready to give special encouragement to the feeblest and weakest in all the flock; and it will be their constant endeavour rightly to divide the word of truth. Oh, that many such pastors may be raised up in every place to feed the flock of God, and in all things to do the office of a good shepherd!

Let us go to Mount Marvel to learn the true nature and the glorious efficacy of faith. A man commanding the mountains to remove out of their places, and those mountains obeying him, is the description of faith given by our Lord himself. Faith, exercised on the promises of Scripture, engages the arm of Omnipotence on our side, so far as the glory of God, and our best, that is, our spiritual interests are concerned. Thus strong faith will remove every mountain out of our way which prevents our progress. It will be somewhat different with those obstacles which the Lord has appointed for the trial of our faith, and to keep us humble. These will not be removed by faith; but the prayer of faith will bring down to us such supplies of grace and strength as to carry us safely over them, and show us, in the end, that their continuance was absolutely needful for us.

With regard to the evil things which may be spoken against us, let us all recollect that the true

way to render them all harmless, is to keep innocence, and do the thing which is right. If we are true believers, and strive habitually to walk uprightly and to have always a conscience void of offence, how little will all the attempts of ill-will or prejudice be able to harm us! Only let us see to it that we give no occasion to those who seek occasion against us, by our inconsistencies, or appearances of evil which we tolerate. If this be the case, the reproaches which are cast against us will fasten upon us, and we shall not be able to wipe them off. He who walks uprightly may for a season be under the cloud, and may be falsely accused. But let him look forward to the time of the end, when the Lord will vindicate the cause of every true disciple of his; and the reproach of his people he will take away from off all the earth.

Let us learn, too, the double blessing which belongs to true charity. It blesses the giver as well as the receiver. If we act in faith and simplicity, and with a real eye to the glory of God, we may depend upon it we shall be no losers, even in this life, for any effort or self-denial which we may have shown for the Lord's sake, or his gospel's sake. If He, who has all power both in heaven and upon earth, be pleased to bless us, surely we must be blessed. He will bless us, he has promised to bless us, if, according to our power, we lay ourselves out to promote his glory and his interests in the world. If abundance be withheld, "God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Finally, let us all seriously lay to heart the absolute necessity of being renewed in the spirit of our mind. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the

leopard his spots?" All the efforts which we make to prop up a righteousness of our own, or to make ourselves better, apart from the atoning blood, the justifying righteousness, and renewing grace of God our Saviour, are equally fruitless. Oh, let us all give up at once the vain attempt; and let us apply, in our true character, to him who performeth all things for us.

"Jesus, thy precious blood alone
Hath power sufficient to atone—
To make the Ethiopian white,
And nature's darkness turn to light."

Let us only apply to him, and put our whole trust and confidence in what he has done and suffered, in what he is now doing and what he has promised to do for us, and we shall be witnesses that he is "made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

HYMN.

How happy are thy saints,
Amid these scenes of wo!
Through thee, their spirit never faints;
From strength to strength they go.

They've trials on their way,
And meet with many a foe;
But while they humbly trust and pray,
From strength to strength they go.

On glittering toys they tread,
Their hearts are not below;
And by thy power and promise led,
From strength to strength they go.

Despair and doubt in vain
Would drive them to and fro;
But how should these their steps retain?
From strength to strength they go.

Their constant peace and love
Like mighty rivers flow ;
And, daily quickened from above,
From strength to strength they go.

My Saviour and my God,
To me thy glory show ;
Then, journeying to thy blessed abode,
From strength to strength I go !

PRAYER.

O LORD GOD of hosts ! blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. Thou dost never fail to help and govern them whom thou dost bring up in thy steadfast fear and love. Give us, we beseech thee, true and steadfast faith in the precious sacrifice of thy dear Son ; and make us all partakers of the sanctifying power of thy Holy Spirit. May all the dispensations of thy providence in this changing world remind us that this is not our rest. May we deny ourselves, and bear the infirmities of the weak. Help us to praise and glorify thy holy name, for the grace which thou hast conferred upon others. Incline our hearts unto thy testimonies, and not unto covetousness. Lead us in paths of righteousness, for thy name's sake ; and bring us, even in this world, to the border of thy heavenly sanctuary. Oh, preserve us from all the mistakes and errors to which we are liable ! May we never venture upon the enemy's ground, or be seduced into any crooked or false ways. Employ us, as thine honoured instruments, in liberating our brethren from the cruel doubts and desponding fears by which they are enslaved. May we walk humbly and walk uprightly, lest we ourselves should again be entangled and overcome by our old sins. Raise up, we pray thee, in every part of thy church, pastors according to thine own heart, to feed the flock of God that is among them ; and give us all grace to receive, with readiness of mind, their godly admonitions. Lord, increase our faith. Hast thou not said, "All things are possible to him that believeth ?" Lord, we believe ; help thou our unbelief. Help us to remove, by the power of faith, all the mountains of difficulty that impede our progress and obstruct our usefulness. If we are falsely accused, give us thy heavenly grace, that we may keep innocency, and do the thing that is right ; remembering that in due time thou wilt plead our cause and execute judgment for us. Oh, thou God of all grace, enlarge the charity of every one of us, and make

us to know, from happy experience, that there is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and that he that watereth shall himself be watered. And finally, we beseech thee, most merciful Father, wash us thoroughly from our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin. Oh that we may none of us be pure in our own sight, while we are not washed from our wickedness! Do thou, the God of peace, sanctify us wholly; and grant that our whole body and soul and spirit may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And to Him, with thyself, O Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end.

LECTURE XIX.

THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS AND VALIANT- FOR-TRUTH JOINED.

My never-ceasing song shall show
The mercies of the Lord;
And make succeeding ages know
How faithful is his word.

The sacred truth his lips pronounce
Shall firm as heaven endure;
And if he speaks a promise once,
Th' eternal grace is sure.

How long the race of David held
The promised Jewish throne!
But there's a nobler covenant sealed
To David's greater Son.

His seed for ever shall possess
A throne above the skies;
The meanest subject of his grace
Shall to that glory rise.

Lord God of hosts! thy wondrous ways
Are sung by saints above:
And saints on earth their honours raise,
To thy unchanging love.

PROVERBS XXII. 20, 21.

HAVE NOT I WRITTEN TO THEE EXCELLENT THINGS IN COUNSELS AND KNOWLEDGE, THAT I MIGHT MAKE THEE KNOW THE CERTAINTY OF THE WORDS OF TRUTH?

VERY excellent are the lessons of heavenly wisdom which are taught us in the Proverbs of Solomon, the son of David, the king of Israel. Whether we refer to the matter, the manner, or the end of his

instructions, nothing but excellent things are presented to our view. As for the matter, that which he wrote was upright, even words of truth; with regard to the manner of his teaching, because he was wise he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs; he sought to find out acceptable words. Then, as to the end of his instructions, how excellent was this—"To give subtlety to the simple, to the young men knowledge and discretion." Or, as he expresses it in the verse we have just read, the great design of all his instructions was this—"That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth." There is no dim reflection of the same excellences alike in the matter, the manner, and the design of the instructive allegory which has for so long been engaging our attention. In a qualified sense, the pious author of the "Pilgrim's Progress" might have said to every reader, "Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth?"

We have to consider in the present Lecture—

I. The additional excellent things which were shown by the shepherds.

II. The experience of Valiant-for-truth.

May we all, by these lessons, be made to know the certainty of the words of truth.

I. We begin with the additional lessons shown by the shepherds in the delectable mountains. 1. One of the pilgrims was very anxious to see the by-way to the dreadful Tophet, which had been shown to Christian. The shepherds therefore went and opened

the trap-door by the side of the hill, and terrible indeed were the sounds that issued therefrom. One was saying—"Cursed be my father for holding back my feet from the way of life and peace!" Another said—"Oh that I had been torn in pieces before I had, to save my life, lost my soul!" And another said—"If I were to live again, how would I deny myself rather than come to this place!" The very earth seemed to groan and quake; and they who had seen this terrible sight came away trembling, and saying—"Blessed is every one that is delivered from this place!"

It is certainly no part of a faithful shepherd's duty carefully to conceal from his flock the awfully tremendous portion of the wicked. Painful as it may be either to speak or to hear of this place of torment, it will be infinitely more painful to feel it, and to be in it. Ministers only speak of it, and describe it, and show the various steps that lead to it, that men may be effectually warned from it; that they may fear every approach to it; and that they may never know, by bitter experience, what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. Oh, let us take timely warning! How dreadful it will be for ungodly parents to hear, in the eternal world of woe, the upbraidings of their children, whom, by their example, or influence, or authority, they have held back from the way of life and of peace. The folly of the man who runs upon a drawn sword to avoid the scratching of a pin, will then be seen to be nothing compared to the madness of him who bartered his soul to save his money, or his credit, or even his life itself. When we realize the bitter regrets of those who are separated by the impassable gulf from the regions of comfort and hope, how ready

should we be to make any sacrifice, sooner than come into that place of torment! It is well for us all to cherish a godly fear to the last, of the tremendous wrath of Almighty God against the wicked. "Who knoweth the power of his anger?" Had not such a feeling as this been salutary, would the merciful and compassionate Saviour so solemnly and so repeatedly have admonished us, how much better it is to part with all that we hold the dearest, sooner than be cast into that place, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched?

2. A looking-glass was given to one of the pilgrims, who had desired it, before they left the Delectable Mountains. This glass was one of a thousand. It would show not only the features of every pilgrim most exactly, but, what was much more, it would show the features of the Prince of pilgrims himself. In addition to this, such marvellous properties did it possess, that every pilgrim who properly used this glass, however ill-favoured and uncomely he had been before, gradually lost his former appearance, and was changed into the likeness of the King. This was the glass which Mercy greatly coveted; and we all do well to covet earnestly the best gifts. She was told it was a virtue to long for such treasures, and her desire was instantly granted. Suitable presents were given by the shepherds to all the pilgrims, and none of them went empty away. But as Greatheart was to be their conductor to the celestial gate, the shepherds did not think it necessary to warn and admonish the pilgrims, as they had formerly done Christian and Hopeful, in parting. They knew that all needful admonitions would be given by their guide, as the matter of every day might require. Thus, after all the excellent things which had here

been shown them, they set out at length to prosecute the remaining part of their pilgrimage.

Before we proceed with them, let us pause a moment, to receive instruction from the last lesson which they were shown. The word of God is the true looking-glass, which we all ought to desire and prize, above all price. Here we may every one see both what we are and what we ought to be. And not that only; through the supply of the Holy Spirit, by a proper use of this blessed word, we may be sanctified and made conformable to our Saviour's image and become meet for the Celestial City. Let us remember, however, it is not a careless or forgetful reading or hearing of the holy Scriptures that will prove a blessing to us. We must receive the truth in the love of it, in order to be saved by it. It is only the engrafted word (the word received with meekness and grafted in our heart by faith) that can save our souls. It is not the word of God in our hands, or in our heads, that sanctifies; but only when it is applied to our hearts, by the effectual power of the Holy Spirit. How can we be profited by the word which we do not obey? "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he, being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." Never let us think we have made the proper use of the word of God, if it has not shown us our own exceeding sinfulness; exhibited to our wondering view the

beauty and the glory of Christ; and has actually commenced the transforming process of changing us into the same image. When we believe in Christ to save us, upon the testimony of the word, the same word is still necessary to feed us, and build us up, and make us meet for the heavenly inheritance. Thus the Redeemer prayed for his disciples: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." Every faithful shepherd can furnish us with much instruction, and may exercise his gifts for our benefit; but, for the most part, it is by a diligent attention to our stated pastors and appointed guides, (as far as they are faithful to the holy Scriptures,) it is by the ministrations of these, that we shall be more minutely warned and encouraged and directed as our circumstances may require.

II. We proceed now to consider the experience of Valiant-for-truth. Our pilgrims met him soon after they had parted from the shepherds on the Delectable Mountains. Having passed the place where Christian had met with Turn-away, and heard a more particular account of his apostasy from their guide, they came to the dark lane where Little-faith had been robbed. Here they found a man standing with his sword drawn and his face all bloody. This proved to be Valiant-for-truth; and he had just been showing how well he deserved the name. Three thieves had come upon him and propounded terms to him. They had required him either to join their company, or to go back from whence he came, or else to die upon the spot. But Valiant-for-truth was not the man either to cast in his lot with thieves, to turn back as an apostate, or to deliver up his life to villains, without an effort to defend it. This he had plainly

told them. Then did they all three fiercely fall upon him, while he had bravely defended himself, until the thieves had fled, when they heard the approaching footsteps of our pilgrim train. The odds, it is true, had been very fearful—three to one; but truth and courage were on one side, and sin and faintness of heart on the other. In addition to this, the single champion had called upon the King to help him, and received from him invisible supplies. The sword, too, with which he had fought was a right Jerusalem blade. Let a man have one of these blades, with a hand to wield it, and skill to use it, and he may venture upon an angel. Its edge will never wax blunt. It will cut flesh and bones, and soul and spirit, and all. The brave defence which he had made was highly commended; and he was joyfully received into the increasing band of pilgrims. After he had been rested and refreshed for a while, he was desired, for the edification of the whole company, to give some account of all the travail that had befallen him by the way. This was the account which this worthy gave of himself. “I came,” he said, “from Darkland. Lo, there was I born; and my parents are there still. What moved me to set out on pilgrimage, was the things which were reported by one Tell-true, who came into our parts. He reported how Christian had left his wife and family, for the sake of the Celestial City; how marvellously he had been strengthened and supported through all the various dangers and adversities that he had encountered by the way, and what a bright and blessed termination he had found to all his toils and trials when he had crossed the river, and had been conducted with sound of trumpet into the palace of the great King. This was the report that

first caused my heart to burn within me, and made me determine to set out for the better land; and thus far am I come on my way thither." Like every genuine pilgrim, he had come through the little Wicket-gate. Tell-true had assured him, that all would be nothing, if he did not begin to enter this way at the gate. When he was told that the whole of Christian's family, whom he had left in the city of Destruction, had taken to the pilgrim's life, and were at that instant standing before him, he cried out—"Oh, how it gladdens my heart! Good man, how joyful will he be, when he shall see them that once refused to go with him, safely arrived within the walls of the Celestial City!" They were all perfectly agreed that saints in glory will recognise one another in the world of joy and love. When Valiant-for-truth was asked if his father and mother were willing that he should go on pilgrimage, he recounted, at full length, the unnumbered objections which they had against his doing so. They objected that it was an idle life, and that the way was very dangerous. With regard to the dangers of the way, they recounted, one by one, with many exaggerations, all the trials and sorrows that had befallen Christian from his first setting out to the end of his course. Nothing was omitted of all that he had to vex his soul from day to day. Every bog in which he had well-nigh sunk—every difficulty up which he had toiled—every giant—every castle—every adversary—was distinctly mentioned. And then, to conclude the whole, they confidently said—"This Christian, about whom there has been such a noise, after all his ventures for a celestial crown, was certainly drowned in the Black River, and never went a foot farther; however it was smoothed over, and the best face put

upon it." Truly all this was discouraging enough. It did frighten numbers, and cool the ardour of multitudes, who a little while before were quite hot upon the Celestial City. Yet none of these things could at all move, or in anywise discourage Valiant-for-truth. They seemed to him as so many nothings. But how so? Because he still believed the things which were reported by Tell-true; and this made him rise superior to all objections, and to be not at all daunted by any discouragements. This was the victory that overcame the world, and all the arguments and pleadings of the world, even his faith. He believed, and therefore came forth—and got into the way; fought against all that came against him; and, having obtained help from above, he journeyed on, until he came to the place where our pilgrims found him.

1. How greatly it tends to our own security to be of good courage! Sooner than comply with the sinful terms that were propounded to him, this brave pilgrim would boldly resist even unto blood, although he had to contend singly, one against three! and he continued to resist until his opponents were obliged to fly. All the adversaries of the real Christian, like our adversary the devil, are obliged at length to flee, when they are manfully resisted. It is true, all are not courageous alike. As every loyal subject of the King is not the King's champion, so every lover of truth is not valiant for truth. But this is his infirmity. If he had more courage he would have more comfort and more success. "Add to your faith, courage." However fearful to sight and sense may be the odds, only let the real Christian go boldly forth in the name of the Lord, against all his adver-

saries—let him be strong and very courageous—and not a man of them shall be able to stand before him. Though an host should encamp against him, he need not fear; though war should rise up against him, in this may he be confident. Let him stand firm, as seeing Him that is invisible; and let him lift up his heart for secret supplies of strength from above, and those supplies shall surely be sent in due time of need. Oh, believer, whatever adversaries may rise up against you, “wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.”

2. But, observe again, how absolutely necessary it is for us to be armed with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, in order to prevail over our spiritual enemies. It was by his true Jerusalem blade and skill to use it, that this champion waxed valiant in fight, and so nobly withstood the lawless foes that sought his destruction. These three foes were, Wildhead, Inconsiderate, and Pragmatic. How is the simple-minded Christian to overcome all the delusions and fancies that spring only from the wild heads of those who broach them? How is he to overcome all the fashionable follies, the ungodly practices, and the dangerous compliances of such as do not consider? How is he to escape the heavy burdens, and self-invented penalties of those who teach for doctrine the commandment of men? We answer, by a proper knowledge and skilful use of the word of God. No wild-fire can lead us astray, if we follow simply the blessed light of holy Scripture. “The entrance of thy word giveth light: it giveth understanding to the simple.” The torrent of fashion or custom, so irresistible to others, will entirely fail to carry us away, if we can

really say, "My heart standeth in awe of thy word." No trifling forms or outward ceremonies, by whatever authority imposed, will be able to pass with us for the essence of religion, if we have tasted the good word of God, and we are able to testify, "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." In short, nothing that is false, or sinful, or ruinous, can withstand the truth of God. "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

3. Finally, let us learn from the triumph of Valiant-for-truth, the amazing power of simple faith. This is the principle of life in every true pilgrim, from his first awakening in the City of Destruction to his safe arrival at the end of his pilgrimage. It is this which enables him to brave all the reproaches and discouragements which would hold him back upon his first setting out—helps him to break through all the adversaries that would impede his progress on the narrow way—gives him the victory over the last enemy, and assures his welcome into the everlasting kingdom. He believes the things which are reported by them that have preached the gospel to him—he knows that these things are reported upon the testimony of Him who cannot lie—he receives the testimony, and sets to his seal that God is true. He believes that he must perish, if he lives and dies in his present state, and that the wrath of God abideth on him. He hears that a door of mercy is opened in the gospel for helpless sinners. He is directed to Christ, through whom the chiefest of sinners may be freely pardoned, and have bold-

ness and access with confidence to the Father. He hears that others, once guilty and depraved like himself, have been pardoned and accepted, have entered through the strait-gate, have been upheld and supported in all their dangers and all their adversities. "He hears how, through faith, they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens"—and he resolves, at any risk, at any venture, to cast in his lot among the people of God, and to be a follower of those who through faith and patience now inherit the promises. Oh that we may all be partakers of this simple, strong, confiding faith! If we count Him faithful that has promised, all the representations and all the discouragements of the ungodly will be to us as so many nothings! We may have to leave many behind in the dark land of our nativity, whom we would gladly have taken with us; we may hear many things grievously and contemptuously spoken against the righteous; not only their troubles and temptations but their infirmities and mistakes may be represented to us in a very wrong and a wicked light. And some of the expressions which have been forced from them by the severity of their sufferings, or when they were scarcely conscious of what they said—some of these expressions may be urged to prove that their end was without honour. But if we are firmly fixed upon the unchanging word of God, none of these things will move us. Whatever the ungodly may now urge against the righteous, we shall look forward to the time when they will be compelled to pronounce a different conclu

sion, and say: "This was he whom we had sometimes in derision, and a proverb of reproach: we fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour: how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!"

HYMN.

WHAT heavenly wisdom is conferred,
My Saviour, through thy precious word!
Its beams dispel the shades of night,
And guide us through the desert right.

To mortal sight it clearly brings
The secrets of eternal things;
And bids us tremble as we view
The wages to transgression due.

As in a glass, it lets us see
Ourselves, and what we ought to be;
Bids us the Saviour's image trace,
And then reflect his glorious face.

Valiant, my Saviour, may I prove,
For truth; nor from it ever move.
Let not my hope or courage fail,
When dangers press and foes assail.

Armed with thy Spirit's glorious blade,
What hosts shall make my heart afraid?
Shall not thy two-edged sword repel
The snares of earth, the wiles of hell?

Oh, may my steadfast heart receive
Thy word, and all its truths believe
Then by each danger undeterred,
Still will thy servant trust thy word.

PRAYER.

BLESSED Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, thou hast magnified thy word above all things; give us, we beseech thee, thy Holy Spirit, and mercifully grant that in every part of our progress through this sinful world, thy word may be a light unto our feet and a lamp to our path. May we tremble with godly fear at the solemn discoveries which it makes, and feel the power of the world to come. Thy law is perfect, converting the soul; and if we are not convinced by the declarations of thy word, neither should we be persuaded though one rose from the dead. Oh grant that we may not be forgetful hearers, but doers of thy word. Give us thy heavenly grace, that in the glass of thy holy word we may not only see what manner of persons we are, but also be changed by the transforming power of thy Holy Spirit, into the image of the Saviour, which is there exhibited to us. Sanctify us through thy truth—thy word is truth. And may we not only receive the truth in the love of it, that we may be saved by it, but may we be valiant for it. Oh make us strong and of a good courage, that we may steadfastly resist all the adversaries that oppose our way to Zion. May we take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, that we may be enabled to overcome all the wild notions and foolish opinions and corrupt doctrines by which we are ever assailed. Through thy precepts may we get understanding, and therefore may we hate every false way. And grant, we most humbly beseech thee, that we may simply and firmly give credit to thy blessed word. Oh grant that, by the powerful principle of this precious faith, we may come out from a world that lieth in wickedness, and declare plainly that we seek a better country. May this be the victory to every one of us, which overcometh the world, even our faith. May we indeed be followers of them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises. Keep us by thy power, through faith unto salvation. And when all our toils and trials are ended, and every adversary is overcome, then may we have an abundant entrance administered unto us, into the everlasting kingdom of our God and Saviour. To Him, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory for ever and ever.

LECTURE XX.

THE ENCHANTED GROUND.

How shall the young secure their hearts,
And guard their lives from sin?
Thy word the choicest rules imparts
To keep the conscience clean.

When once it enters to the mind,
It spreads such light abroad,
The meanest souls instruction find,
And raise their thoughts to God.

'Tis like the sun, a heavenly light,
That guides us all the day;
And through the dangers of the night,
A lamp to lead our way.

The men that keep thy law with care,
And meditate thy word,
Grow wiser than their teachers are,
And better know the Lord.

Thy precepts make me truly wise;
I hate the sinner's road:
I hate my own vain thoughts that rise,
But love thy law, my God.

Thy word is everlasting truth,
How pure is every page!
That holy book shall guide our youth,
And well support our age.

PSALM CXIX. 105.

THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET, AND A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH.

THE person who travels on a dark and dangerous road, through an unknown country, is liable to stumble, and to wander away at every step. But if he is furnished with a lamp or a lantern, by dili-

gent circumspection and a proper use of the friendly light which he carries with him, he may escape every danger and avoid every mistake, even when he passes over the most dangerous and deceitful part of his journey. Thus it is with the Christian pilgrim to the Celestial City. By a proper use of the Holy Scriptures he is directed right, avoids every stumbling-block, and pursues his way safely, however dark or difficult his path may be. He can say to the God of his salvation: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

We shall find this important verse illustrated as we consider the journey of our pilgrims over the Enchanted Ground. We shall notice,

- I. A description of the Enchanted Ground.
- II. The two sleepers whom they found there; and
- III. Their meeting with the eminent pilgrim, Standfast.

I. We begin with the description of this dangerous part of the road. Soon after their meeting with Valiant-for-truth, they came to the Enchanted Ground, where the air naturally tended to make one drowsy. In some parts it was all grown over with thorns and briars, and here and there were enchanted arbours, in which if a man sits, he generally sleeps, and wakes no more. Over this dangerous road Greatheart led the way, and Valiant brought up the rear, each keeping his eye especially upon the weakest and most timid of the party. Their difficulties were soon greatly increased by a thick mist in which they were enveloped. But, notwithstanding this, through the encouraging counsel of him that went before, and the friendly aid of him that

guarded them behind, they all continued to go forward. The way, too, was very slippery, as well as dark and rough. At length they came to a most enticing harbour, that seemed to invite their weary feet to turn in and rest. But having learned from their guide that this harbour was placed there by the enemy of pilgrims to allure them to destruction, not one of the party would so much as look at the enticement which it presented; but they all continued to press forward. Still proceeding, they came to a very intricate part of the road, where there is great danger of losing the way. As it had now become quite dark, this danger was considerably increased. But the guide paused for a moment, struck a light, pulled out his map of the road, and, having thoroughly considered it for a few moments, he proceeded, without any hesitation, to go before them in the right way. Had any other path been taken but the one he chose, the whole party had been overwhelmed in a yawning pit. All the ways led to death except the one selected by the guide. Then was it very apparent how necessary it is for all who go on pilgrimage to be furnished with a map, and how diligently they ought to consult it, whenever they are in uncertainty about the way wherein they should go.

Let us, my brethren, expect to have enchanted ground to pass over in our progress through the world, and let us endeavour to surmount the snares and dangers and difficulties which it presents to us in the manner which is here signified. People who are so situated as to be obliged to have much intercourse with the world—who are deeply engaged in business, or who have many perplexing cares and anxieties to distract and disquiet their minds—may

be said to be passing over the Enchanted Ground. Did we ever mingle much among those who have no realizing sense of the life of the world to come, and not find the deadening influence which it had upon our hearts? As if the very air which we breathed disposed to drowsiness, we grew dull and languid in spiritual things. The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, are compared to thorns and briers. How often do they choke the good impressions and spiritual desires which once were awakened in the heart, and render them all fruitless and of none effect! How often do they act like entangling thorns and briers, which are always hurtful and injurious to the traveller, and sometimes hold him fast in the wilderness, and prevent him proceeding farther to the place for which he set out! "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven!" When the professor of religion is thus mixed with the world, entangled with care, or possessed of deceitful and uncertain riches, for the most part his way is dark and slippery; he sticks fast, as it were, in the mire of earth; he is enveloped in a thick mist, and is unable to see the way before him. And very frequently, through the deceitfulness of riches, (the ground is enchanted upon which he treads,) he imagines that he is pursuing the way to the Celestial City when his face is clearly turned in the opposite direction. Or else he is decoyed by some of the deceitful baits of the wicked one; and, through love of ease, or some temporal indulgence, he settles down into a state of carnal security, and begins to sleep like others; and then, unless his eyes are marvellously enlightened, he sleeps the sleep of death.

How may the true pilgrim avoid all these dangers, when they come in his way? Let him follow the steps and listen to the admonitions of faithful ministers and upright Christians—let him be a follower of them as they follow Christ—let him suspect danger where they tell him from the word of God there is danger. And when true followers of Christ are in doubt and perplexity as to the path of duty, and know not which way they should take, let them imitate the conduct of the pilgrim's guide under like circumstances. He struck a light, and pulled out his map and diligently studied it, and then was enabled to reject every false way, and to select the only path which was the right and the safe one. The word of God, my brethren, is a perfect map of the pilgrim's way from the City of Destruction to the Celestial Gate. Through the darkness in which he is enveloped, he is often unable to see his way, and to discern clearly the path in which he should go. But let him only pray earnestly for the gracious light of the Holy Spirit to shine upon his own word, to open his eyes, and to make the right path plain before him, and he shall not seek in vain. As if a new light were struck and the clear shining of a candle did give him light, he shall know the truth and be directed right. When the Holy Spirit sheds a beam of light upon the page of Scripture, and we are inclined simply to obey the light which opens before us, we shall escape every danger, and pass on unhurt through every snare. Then the Divine testimony will be to us not only a map to heaven, in which every forbidden path and the highway of holiness are clearly marked, but it will be also "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path."

II. We proceed to notice the two sleepers whom our pilgrims found on the Enchanted Ground. They went on until they came to another harbour, by the way-side. In that harbour there lay two men, whose names were Heedless and Toobold. Both these had taken to the pilgrim's life, and had proceeded thus far on the road; but, being wearied when they arrived at this place, they sat down to rest, and so fell fast asleep. Our pilgrims knew they were in an evil case, and tried to rouse them up. They called to them, and besought them to awake. But there was no voice, and none to answer. Then did the guide give them a thorough shaking; but still they awoke not; only they spoke a little in their sleep. What they said, however, was so strange and wild and incoherent, that the little children in the pilgrim's train could not forbear from laughing. But though the children laughed at what they heard, to see these two men laid here asleep, and to listen to the foolish manner in which they spoke while fast asleep, was deeply affecting to all the rest who could seriously consider. This Enchanted Ground is one of the last refuges to which the enemy of pilgrims resorts to practise his wiles against them. Here he prevails against many in the garb of pilgrims who have come thus far on pilgrimage, but whose bold self-confidence and heedless steps evidently declare that they were never, in their hearts, genuine pilgrims. Here, the grand adversary thinks, as they approach the end of their course, they will be weary, and inclined to loiter; here, therefore, all his wiles are employed to draw them into these enchanted harbours, that they may sleep the sleep of death. The guide's admonition after this spectacle was very seasonable. This Enchanted Ground, with these harbours, he told them,

is placed very near the land of Beulah ; and these attempts of the wicked one against pilgrims are more frequent when they are almost at their journey's end. Wherefore, he said, let pilgrims look to themselves, lest it happen to them as it has done to these that are fallen asleep, as you see, and none can awake them. Neither the example which they saw, nor the admonition which they heard, was lost upon our pilgrims. They earnestly besought him to keep his lantern burning all the rest of the way, that they might go by its light through the darkness which still surrounded them. He complied with their request. Still, however, the way was very uncomfortable, especially for the children. They cried for help, therefore, to Him who loveth pilgrims ; and, ere long, a wind arose, which drove away the fog, and the air became more clear. But they were yet upon the Enchanted Ground, only they could see one another, and the way in which they were to go was plain before them.

The case of Heedless and Toobold is very affecting and full of instruction. Were these two men, after they appeared to have advanced so far, at length discovered fast bound in this fatal slumber ? Oh let us consider that no advances which we have made, or appear to have made in religion, can ever make it safe for us to dispense with watchfulness and prayer. Men may turn the grace of God into lasciviousness ; and we must keep in remembrance, "that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not." Was it Heedless and Toobold who were thus drawn aside at the last into the snare of the enemy ? These names plainly indicate the kind of persons who, soon or late, will be detected as hypocrites and dissem-

blers with God. Such as take up a profession of the gospel in a heedless manner, without any true conviction of their sin, and without any living union betwixt their souls and Christ, can never be able to endure to the end. The like may be said of all such as proceed with an overweening self-confidence, feeling nothing of their blindness and weakness and frailty ; and who never look up to the God of salvation for wisdom to direct them, for strength to support them, and for grace to sanctify and keep them. Such men as these may long maintain a form of godliness, though it be a weariness to them. But after a while, he who knows the inward unsoundness of their hearts will set a stumbling-block before them. That is, he will place them by his providence in such a position as tends to draw forth their real character, and to manifest the unsoundness of their profession. Some worldly bait will prove irresistible to them, and they will be drawn aside, retaining perhaps nothing of their religion except a few empty notions, or lifeless forms, which neither affect their hearts nor influence their lives. And while they are fast asleep in the arms of worldly prosperity, they will, perhaps, attempt to excuse their conduct by the false maxims and bad examples of many around them. Did these poor men sleep so soundly that they could not be awakened ? And at the same time did they speak so wildly that even the children laughed at what they said ? Oh the deadening and infatuating effects of unsanctified prosperity ! When those who once perhaps were deeply affected about eternal things, have sunk into carnal security, how extremely difficult it is to arouse them out of their fatal slumber ! Providences cannot rouse them ; conscience cannot alarm them. Christians speak to them, but they do not

rise ; ministers shake them, but they slumber on. And yet, while they are sunk in this carnal slumber, and they are fast bound in worldliness and vanity, and are neglecting the plainest precepts of religion, they talk about religion like people who talk in their sleep, in such a wild and foolish manner, and with such a bold and positive tone, as to excite the ridicule of the veriest babe in the school of Christ. But such examples are deeply affecting, and very alarming to all who properly consider them. They should make us more diligent than ever in examining the state of our hearts ; more earnest in searching the Scriptures, and more frequent in our application to the throne of grace ; lest, having made a profession of religion, and maintained that profession amidst many trials and difficulties, we should at length be overcome with destructive sleep, and prove apostates at last. The bright glare of worldly prosperity has detected the hypocrisy of many who seemed to be something, and made profession of godliness in the dark night of adversity. Oh, let us listen to the solemn warning and the animating assurance addressed to us by the voice of heavenly wisdom :—
“The turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity (or the ease) of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.”

III. We have, lastly, to notice the meeting of our pilgrims with an eminent character before they left the enchanted region. When they were almost at the end of this ground, they heard a solemn noise, as of one much concerned. Advancing a little, they beheld a man on his knees, with hands and eyes lifted up, and speaking, as they thought, earnestly

to one that was above. This proved to be one Standfast, long known to Father Honest, who announced him to his companions as a right good pilgrim. The meeting between the two friends was very cordial. The one rejoiced to have found his friend upon that road ; and the other that he had found his friend so well employed. Standfast had no idea that his prayer had been observed by any human being ; as he had been only, as he supposed, pouring out his heart, in secret, to Him who seeth in secret. Being asked what was the special cause and subject of the petition which he had just been offering, he told them in full. He knew that he was still on the Enchanted Ground. He had been musing upon the dangerous nature of the road. He had sighed to think what numbers had come thus far on pilgrimage, and there had been stopped and destroyed. The example of Heedless and Toobold was fresh before him. He was thinking of the manner of death in which men were destroyed in that place ; not violently, but easily and quietly, like one going asleep. While he was thus musing, a female seducer, whose name was Bubble, came to him, and with many flattering promises, and with a great variety of intoxicating pictures of greatness and grandeur and happiness, which she pretended were all at her disposal, she earnestly and repeatedly besought him to go after her. This was the form of this boastful and empty deceiver. She was tall and imposing in her appearance, though with something of a swarthy complexion. She spoke very smoothly, and gave a smile at the end of every sentence. She wore a great purse by her side, and her hand was constantly in it, fingering her money, as if that was her heart's delight. This was the person who tried by earnest

and repeated solicitations to win the affections of this excellent pilgrim, and to turn him aside out of the way. But she had entirely mistaken her man. Mr. Standfast was not the man to be attracted by Madame Bubble. He felt no manner of leaning towards her. Neither her imposing appearance, nor her flattering words, nor her continual smiles, her shining treasures, nor any of the glittering castles which she built, could make the least impression upon his heart. He rejected all her proposals; but finding she still pursued him with her enticements, then he betook himself to his knees, and with cries and uplifted hands had sought for help from above. By this he prevailed, and the tempter departed. What a noble victory was this! Standfast himself knew not the greatness of the deliverance which he had obtained, until he heard from the guide of our pilgrims a more particular account of this woman, with all her witchcrafts and all her sorceries. He gave a full description of her evil doings, and said she was a witch, by whose sorceries the ground upon which they were still walking was enchanted. He represented her as a perfect Delilah, who only entices men to slumber on her lap that she may rob them of their strength, and deliver them bound into the hand of the enemy, with whom she is in league. Her nature is such that whoever looks upon her beauty thereby becomes an enemy and a rebel to the Celestial King. Her deception is equal to her wickedness. She promises crowns and kingdoms; but her promises, like herself, are false and hollow. Numbers, by believing her words, have been brought to the halter; and ten thousand times more, by following her advice, have been drawn to destruction and everlasting perdition. It was she that persuaded

Judas to sell his Lord, and that prevailed with Demas to forsake the pilgrim's path. None can tell the mischief that she has done. She is the cause of nearly all the strifes and divisions, the fierce contentions and bitter animosities that are in the world. In short, so vast is her influence, and so endless are her witchcrafts, she is **THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL**.

Let us learn, dear brethren, from this the true secret of steadfastness in our religious profession, and the only way to pass unhurt amid all the dangers and snares and temptations and delusions of the Enchanted Ground. Think how this eminent pilgrim was engaged when the others overtook him. He felt his weakness, he perceived the dangers that were on every side, and he cried earnestly to the strong for strength and protection. He was instant in prayer, and therefore he was steadfast in the faith. No bewitching voice could turn him aside; no splendid promise could move his heart. And it is thus, my brethren, with every true Israelite whose heart is right with God; who is deeply conscious of his own corruption and frailty, and whose eyes are ever unto the Lord, to deliver him from every snare, and to hold him up that his footsteps slip not. Every age has its peculiar bubble. The god of this world is constantly broaching some specious plan, some glittering scheme, for acquiring wealth and obtaining all the distinctions and advantages in which a carnal heart can find gratification. Multitudes are carried away by the delusion. They run after the bubble and try to catch it. For the most part, it eludes their fond pursuit; but if ever they come up to it, and put forth their hand to gain it, at once it bursts in their eager grasp. They will not believe what the Bible tells them respecting the danger

and the deceitfulness of riches, and the fearful difficulties which they present in the way to heaven. Satan, the god of this world, blinds their eyes. They give credit to the smooth and flattering things which are spoken by the men of this world; and they enter, with all their heart and with all their soul, into any scheme, or project, or speculation, which promises to make them a fortune. They listen to the voice of the charmer. They are bewitched by her sorceries, that they should not obey the truth. "They go after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through their liver; as a bird they hasten to the snare, and know not that it is for their life." Oh, my brethren, take heed and beware of covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Let Him have your heart whose right it is. Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth. They that have no root in themselves are choked by the deceitfulness of riches and the cares of the world. The simple (that is, those who are destitute of true religion) are carried away by the false and flattering representations of the deceiver. "With her much fair speech she causeth them to yield, with the flattery of her lips she forceth them." But whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her. Only let your heart be upright before God; belong really to the household of faith and the Israel of God; stand fast in the faith, and wrestle in prayer as Jacob did when he obtained the name of Israel, and no enchanting voice shall draw you aside; no threefold machination of the world, the flesh and the devil shall pluck you away. "Surely there is no enchantment against

Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel." Still, however, be not high-minded, but fear; and constantly recollect, that only by the union of simple faith and fervent prayer, you will be able to overcome the world, and to resist that lusting worldly spirit which you carry within you, and which is the root of all evil. You are never safe if you cease to strive and to pray against this. "She hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her."

HYMN.

O THOU, whose never-failing care
Preserves thy saints from every snare,
Help us thy praise to sound!
Thy Spirit and thy word unite
To guide our doubtful footsteps right,
Amid the Enchanted Ground.

When darkness veiled the face of day,
And, all uncertain of our way,
No ray of light we found;
Thy holy word, with beaming sweet,
The way made plain for all our feet,
And through the Enchanted Ground.

Mid scenes where bold and heedless feet
Are snared, and from thy paths retreat,
Thy gracious light around
Shall make the wiles of Satan clear,
And fill our hearts with holy fear,
While on the Enchanted Ground.

When earthly cares our minds perplexed
And worldly thoughts our spirits vexed,
What ready help we found,
When at thy throne, with bended knee,
We humbly cried for help from thee,
Upon the Enchanted Ground!

Great Lord of all ! thy blissful smile
Unmasked the world and showed its guile ;
Let but thy love abound,
And then how vain and little worth
Are all the glittering toys of earth,
On most Enchanted Ground.

PRAYER.

O LORD, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and such great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our mortal nature, we cannot always stand upright ; strengthen us, we beseech thee, with might by thy Holy Spirit in the inner man. Pardon and accept us in thy dear Son ; and for his sake support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations. We confess, O Lord, that through the earthliness of our hearts, we are too much attracted by the things of time and sense, and at any time we are liable to be drawn aside by them. We tread, as it were, upon enchanted ground, where the climate disposes to drowsiness. We have none of us that realizing apprehension of eternal things which we ought to have. How prone we are to slumber and sleep, and to grow languid and lifeless in our soul ! Our soul cleaveth unto the dust. Oh, quicken us, according to thy word. Sow in our hearts the seed of eternal life, and mercifully grant that it may never be choked or rendered unfruitful, either by the cares, or the riches, or the pleasures of the world. Make us deeply sensible of the many snares and dangers that surround us. May we ponder the path of our feet, that all our ways may be established. May thy blessed word instruct us, and thy Holy Spirit enlighten us, at every step. Oh, let thy word be a light unto our feet, and a lantern to our path ! Preserve us, we most humbly beseech thee, from every snare and every trap into which our heedless or presumptuous feet are inclined to run. May our hearts be right with thee ; and may we watch always, and never have any confidence in the flesh. Oh, deliver us from the spirit of slumber. Lighten our eyes, that we sleep not the sleep of death. May we be instant in prayer, that we may stand fast in the faith. Save us from all the covetous and carnal desires of this present evil world. Deliver us from that love of money, which is the root of all evil. May we be crucified unto the world, and the world unto us

There be many that say, Who will show us any good? but, Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. May we count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord; and scorn the glittering trifles of this fleeting world, that we may enjoy, both now and for ever, his unsearchable and durable riches. To Him, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be honour, and glory, and majesty, and dominion, for ever and ever.

LECTURE XXI.

BEULAH'S LAND AND JORDAN'S STREAM.

THERE is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers;
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

But timorous mortals start and shrink
To cross this narrow sea;
And linger, shivering, on the brink,
And fear to launch away.

Oh! could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love
With unclouded eyes!

Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore.

JOSHUA III. 3, 4.

AND THEY COMMANDED THE PEOPLE, SAYING, WHEN YE SEE THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OF THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND THE PRIESTS THE LEVITES BEARING IT, THEN YE SHALL REMOVE FROM YOUR PLACE, AND GO AFTER IT. YET THERE SHALL BE A SPACE BETWEEN YOU AND IT, ABOUT TWO THOUSAND CUBITS BY MEASURE: COME NOT NEAR UNTO IT, THAT YE MAY KNOW THE WAY BY WHICH YE MUST GO: FOR YE HAVE NOT PASSED THIS WAY HERETOFORE.

THE tribes of Israel had well-nigh come to the end of their weary wanderings in the wilderness,

when they received the instructions which are here recorded. The land of Canaan lay now fully in their view ; there was only one barrier to be crossed, and then their feet would actually stand on the promised inheritance. They were almost there.

“But Jordan rolled between !”

The day was fixed for the crossing over ; they were apprized of it, and enjoined to make special preparation for it. “Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves : for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you.” The time, the manner, and all the circumstances of their passage were arranged before they came actually to make it. And very minute were the directions they received to observe on that memorable occasion. When they saw the priests bearing the ark of the covenant, then, and not till then, they were to remove out of their place, and go after it. But this was not to be done in a disorderly, irregular manner. They were not to follow in a confused crowd. There was to be a space of about three-quarters of a mile between the priests bearing the ark and the rest of the army ; and the march was not to begin until the priests had come to their appointed station. By this arrangement the whole congregation would see the ark, and the place where the waters divided to make them a passage, and would know the way by which they must go. All this was very necessary. For although they were familiar with many parts of the wilderness, having tracked it again and again, they were now upon untrodden ground. They had not passed this way heretofore.

This will serve for the introduction to the pre-

sent lecture. Our pilgrims are now approaching the end of their pilgrimage. And we have now to consider,

- I. Their experience on the borders of the river.
- II. The manner of Christiana's crossing over.

I. As to their experience on the borders of the river. The dangers of the Enchanted Ground were now surmounted, and they were come to the land of Beulah, where the sun shineth night and day. Here they could lie down in peace and rest in safety, and partake, without fear, of the precious things which the land produced. No enemy was suffered to come nigh them, and every dainty was given to them richly to enjoy. It was a fruitful and happy land where they were. "Joy and gladness were found therein; thanksgiving and the voice of melody." All the discourse of those with whom they conversed had reference to the Celestial City and its glorious King. Each individual who opened his lips seemed to say: "My heart is inditing a good matter, I speak of the things which I have made touching the King." One said, "More pilgrims are come to town!" And another said, "So many went over the water, and were let in at the golden gates to-day." Then it was announced, "A legion of shining visitors from the city has just arrived, by which we know that more pilgrims are on the road, for here they come to wait for them, and to comfort them after their sorrow." Our pilgrims here were feasted with royal dainties, and favoured with visions of approaching glory. They journeyed forward, and it was well with them. One drawback only they found

to their happy experience. It was this: When they tasted of the water of the river over which they were to go, it was rather bitter to the palate; but it proved quite sweet after it was down. Here it was recounted to them what noble triumphs had been won by pilgrims in times of old: how the people that knew their King, out of weakness had been made strong, and done exploits. They listened also with the most intense interest to what was reported respecting the river that was now gliding full in their view. They were informed that it was subject to ebbs and flows. At one time it overflows all its banks; and then it rages and swells and foams and tosses like the troubled sea. But at particular seasons, it is in a manner well-nigh dried up, and is reduced to an insignificant rill, which may be crossed at a single stride. Some pilgrims, they were told, and excellent ones too, had had to buffet long with the swelling torrent, and verily thought they would be drowned in the depths. To others it had been so remarkably low, that they had stepped over dryshod, without so much as even wetting the soles of their feet. Many kind offices were performed for the pilgrims who lingered here, by the children of the town. They would go into the King's garden and gather the choicest and sweetest flowers, and bring them, and put them with much affection into the hands of the pilgrims. These regions were a kind of spicy grove. They produced camphire and spike-nard, saffron, calamus, and cinnamon, and all the other chief spices—aloes and cassia, frankincense and myrrh own this as their native soil. The chambers of the pilgrims were perfumed with these; and with these they are anointed when the appointed time has

come, to prepare them for their passage over the river.

Here let us pause for a few moments to commune each with his own heart. We may be real Christians and yet know little of the triumphant experience of those who are happy inhabitants of the land of Beulah. Sometimes real saints and eminent saints, when they approach their journey's end, and linger for a while on the verge of the eternal world, do not find it a land where the sun shineth day and night. On the other hand, they sometimes find it enveloped in gloom and mist and darkness; and neither sun, moon, nor stars, for many days appear. They trust, indeed, in the tender mercy of their God for ever; they keep firm hold of the precious promises of the gospel; and with a deeper sense than ever of their vileness and depravity, they renew again and again their earnest application by faith for a personal interest in the redemption that is in Christ. But they have no rapture, no triumph, no joy. They cannot come to revelations and visions. They have not a word to say of scenes of glory opening upon their sight, or of seraphic sounds ringing in their ears. Their minds, for the most part, are absorbed with a deep and solemn sense of the nearness and reality and amazing importance of eternal things. Nature shrinks at the prospect of death; and the sense which they have of their own sinfulness and the holiness of God has a more visible and evident effect upon them than their faith in Christ, and their hope of everlasting life, to be enjoyed through him. But, in the absence of rapture and triumph, they have evidently got what is a more undoubted mark of the Holy Spirit's work—a broken and a contrite

heart, an entire committal of their souls to Christ to save them, and a deep concern for the interests of his kingdom. When they hear of poor sinners flocking to Christ for salvation, or of the gracious manner in which he has stilled the fears, and cheered the heart, and received the souls of some that have just departed in the true faith and fear of his name, all their quickest interests are roused, the water stands in their eyes, and something like a sensation of gladness is experienced in their hearts. And shall we say that such as these are not true pilgrims, because they do not tell of raptures? Shall we say that they have no true faith, because their godly fear has evidently got before their lively hope? "If I say, I will speak thus; lo, then I should offend against the generation of thy children." Nowhere in the Bible is an ecstasy of joy insisted upon as an evidence of dying in the Lord. We doubt not that this is often granted to upright souls, where it is clearly and evidently the special work and operation of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. But we fear, also, it is often professed by such as have no root in themselves, when it arises either from natural excitement, or the delusion of the great deceiver. To use the words of a sober, but deeply-experienced Christian—"Many excellent persons are incapacitated from speaking much in their last hours, and we ought by no means to judge of men's characters on these grounds. The Scriptures are generally silent about the manner in which the saints of the Most High finished their course, and only few exceptions are found to this rule. We are, indeed, fully instructed in the nature of their faith, and the effects which it had upon their life and conduct; and thus assuredly

we infer that they died in the Lord, and entered into rest." Only let our faith be of the true saving kind; and let us habitually prove that it is so, by the effect which it has upon our life and conduct, and then, doubtless, all will be well, when we actually stand on Jordan's brink, and it shall be said to us, "Thou art this day to cross over."

Let it not, however, be supposed for a moment that we undervalue spiritual joy, or that we think lightly of those who are enabled to witness a good confession in the closing scene, and to testify then of the power and love and grace and preciousness of Him in whom they have believed. No, dear brethren, "we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." For your own sake,—for the comfortless troubles' sake of the oppressed, and for the honour of the gospel; that is, for your Saviour's sake—you should long ardently, and strive diligently, to have the earnest of the Spirit in your hearts, and to be always confident. Only let a consistent life show that your confidence is not the confidence of delusion; and let it be so invariably coupled with godly fear as to show that it is not the confidence of presumption; and then the more confidence you have the better. Better for yourself, better for the comfort of others, and better for the honour of true religion. How happy for yourselves to have the beginning and the earnest of heaven, before you actually arrive there! Oh, think, when you approach your journey's end, how good and how pleasant it must be to be delivered from every painful doubt and every tormenting fear, and to be eagerly aspiring after the full enjoyment of that inheritance of which you have tasted the earnest and the beginning, and have found it so delight-

ful ! Blessed are the people that are in such a case ! Oh, while you have health and strength, and recollection and ease, give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. Be not satisfied with a general hope of pardon ; but before the evil days come, strive to be assured of your personal interest in that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure. Will you regret such pains, or will you not think them well bestowed, when you come to die ? Oh, think how sweet it will be to look death in the face without any dismay, and to be able to say, “ I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he will keep that which I have committed to him ;” or to be able to raise a still higher note of triumph, and to say, “ I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” For your own sake, do not willingly pass by the land of Beulah. Despise not that pleasant land. For the sake of others who are weighed down and in heaviness through manifold temptations, aspire after the experience of an assured Christian. Many real Christians go heavily, and are in doubt and fear all their days. Oh, rise to the higher regions of full assurance and established hope, and then you may strengthen your brethren, and be a succourer of many. They that fear God will be glad when they see you, if you are able to testify of the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Only attain to the full measure of the stature of Christ—know in whom you have believed—rejoice in the Lord, and

be glad in the Rock of your salvation—and who can tell the cheering effect it may have upon others! Many shall see it, and put their trust in the Lord. For their sake, therefore, seek after assurance. Moreover, for the honour of religion, bring not an evil report on the land of promise. Speak not of the way to Zion as if it were nothing else but a passage through a region of darkness and mist and gloom. If we find it so, we must ascribe it to our own infirmity. Upright and established believers will find the ways of wisdom to be pleasantness and all her paths to be peace. Provision is made for their present comfort and security, as well as for their everlasting salvation and their future glory. When they perceive their personal interest in the everlasting covenant, and have the earnest of the Spirit within them, drawing their thoughts and their desires to high and heavenly things, how happy must they be! “Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.” How eminently do they glorify their God and adorn their profession, when they can thus sing in the ways of the Lord, that great is the glory of the Lord. Put all these three motives together, and then consider how loudly you are called upon to live near to God, so that you may be telling of his salvation from day to day.

II. We pass now to the second part of our subject, and proceed to consider the manner of Christiana's crossing the river.

She had a clear intimation given her, that the

time of her departure was at hand. As the company of pilgrims remained still in the land of Beulah, a post came from the Celestial City with matters of deepest interest to one Christiana, the wife of Christian the pilgrim. This was the substance of the letter which was delivered by the messenger:—"The Master calleth for thee, and expecteth that thou shouldest stand in his presence, beyond the river, in clothes of immortality, within these ten days." At the same time the messenger delivered to Christiana a true token that he was indeed commissioned by the King to deliver that message. The token was a silver arrow sharpened with love, let easily into her heart, which by degrees wrought so effectually with her, that at the time appointed she must needs be gone.

See now how this excellent pilgrim acted upon the receipt of this message. She had no prayer to make, "Spare me a little, before I go hence." She was ready to be offered and to launch away when the time of her departure had come. First she called for the guide, who had so wisely and so faithfully conducted her through the principal part of her past journey. She told him the solemn message she had received, and pointed to the arrow which then lay by her side. And she received from his mouth the counsel and advice and directions suitable for a pilgrim on the verge of Jordan and just about to enter its waters. Next she called for her children. When they stood before her, she gave them every one her solemn blessing, commended them all for the good part they had evidently been inclined to choose, and solemnly charged them all to be ready against the messenger from the Celestial City should come for



them. This said, and having bequeathed to the poor the little she had, she sent for all the dear friends who had been her fellow-travellers and companions in her eventful pilgrimage. She gratefully acknowledged the kindness which they had shown to her and to her's, and earnestly besought the most eminent among them (now that she herself was about to be taken) still to have an eye to her children, who were left. The old pilgrim Honest said to her—"I wish you a fair day when you set out for Mount Zion, and shall be glad to see that you go over the river dryshod." But she answered—"Come wet, come dry, I long to be gone; for, however the weather is on my journey, I shall have time enough when I come there, to sit down and rest me and dry me." Then when Ready-to-halt and Despondency and Feeblemind stood before her, she addressed to them, individually, a word in season, tenderly admonishing them each to watch against his peculiar infirmity; and endeavoured to strengthen and encourage and comfort them as their cases required.

Now see her actual passage over the river. Her house was set in order—her parting acknowledgments and admonitions were all delivered; and having lingered the appointed time on the immediate brink of the river, at length the memorable day dawned when Christiana, the wife of Christian, was to finish her course; and it was said to her—"Thou art this day to go over this Jordan." Spectators were standing on both the opposite banks of the river, to see how she finished her progress. All her friends had accompanied her to the edge of the water. But on the other side all the bank was full of horses and chariots, which were come down from above to

accompany her to the city gate. So she came forth, and entered the river, beckoning a farewell to those she was leaving on the wilderness side of the water. The last words she was heard to say were, "I come, Lord, to be with thee, and bless thee." So her children and friends returned to their places; for those that waited for her had conveyed her out of their sight. She went and called and entered in at the gate, and found the same ready admittance, and was welcomed with the same demonstrations of joy, with which Christian had been before. No sooner was she gone than all the children began to weep. But Greatheart and Valiant played upon the well-tuned cymbals and harp for joy.

What, my brethren, shall we say to these things? Oh that this affecting scene may leave a deep and lasting impression upon every one of our hearts! The days of our pilgrimage in this world of trial will soon be accomplished, and we must every one stand on the verge of the eternal world. In what manner, or with what prospect, shall we be able to pass out of time into eternity? We may suddenly be called away, without any special intimation that death is near. Are we prepared to die? Is the one thing, the grand and all-important matter, secured? Are we personally interested in Him, who alone can comfort and support us in the immediate prospect of eternity—deliver us from the bitter pains of eternal death—and land us safe in the heavenly Canaan? How soon may the swift-winged messenger from the King of Heaven arrive at our dwelling, and deliver to us individually the solemn message—"Set thine house in order; for thou shall die and not live!" And how convincing a token he may leave with us.

that his words are true, and shall soon be verified ! A sickness unto death, any incurable disease, which is left behind, will be such a token ; and remain like an arrow, gradually forcing its way to the heart, to assure us that he must soon be gone. Now consider this, if you are a genuine pilgrim to the Celestial City, (*i. e.* a genuine penitent, united by a true and living faith to the only Saviour of sinners) —if this be your state and character, consider, I say, that that arrow, however sharp it may be, “is sharpened with love.” It is sent to release you from a body of sin and death, to take you from a world of trial and sorrow, and to place you within the walls of the city after which you have been so long aspiring : that there you may be clothed with immortality, and see Him whom having not seen you love ! Why then, O believer, should you start or shrink when the summons comes ? Comforts and mercies, and blessings and enjoyments, you may have had by the way. But better is the end of a thing than the beginning. And better—oh, how much better—is heaven itself than any foretaste or beginning of heaven which you ever had on your way thither ! Is not the ark of the covenant gone on before you ? Be ready, therefore, to remove out of your place and to go after it. What though you have not passed this way heretofore ? The great High-priest of your profession—He who makes atonement for all your sins—He who secures the mercy of God by covenant to you—He who is your advocate and your forerunner,—has tasted death and gone before ; and through him you know the way by which you must go through the gate of death to the land and region of everlasting life. Oh that we may one and all

have nothing to do but to die, when the appointed hour has actually arrived! Oh that we may none of us have to sow when we ought to reap! That we may not have to cry, when we receive a true token of our approaching dissolution—

“A little longer,—yet a little longer,—
Oh, let me stay, to wash away my stains,
And fit me for my passage.”

Oh that we may be ready to be offered when the time of our departure is come!—that when our course is finished we may have a desire to depart and be with Christ—that we may go forth, and enter the river with a beckon of farewell to those we leave behind—and that our last words may be, “I come, Lord, to be with thee, and bless thee!” Lord, reveal thyself to us now as our Saviour and our Redeemer; guide us by thy good Spirit to the end of our earthly pilgrimage; and then

“When we tread the brink of Jordan,
Bid our anxious fears subside;
Bear us through the swelling torrent,
Land us safe on Canaan’s side:
Songs of praises we will ever sing to Thee!”

HYMN.

THERE is a good and pleasant land
On this side Jordan’s stream,
Where happy saints delighted stand,
And bask in glory’s beam.

Lord, let me know, before I die,
The wonders of thy hand;
And let me see, with mortal eye,
That good and pleasant land.

My Saviour, tell me thou art mine;
 And let me understand
 How bright thy love and mercy shine
 Within that pleasant land.

And when thy sovereign voice shall say,
 "This land is not thy rest;
 Arise, depart, and come away,
 To realms completely blest"—

Then shall my terrors all have ceased;
 Thy footprints I shall see,
 My Lord, my God, my great High-Priest,
 And I will pass to thee!

And if I found upon the way
 A good and pleasant land,
 What shall I find, when I survey
 The joys at thy right hand?

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY Father, who by thy Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life, pour down thy Holy Spirit into our hearts, and make the affecting truths which we have now heard abidingly profitable to us. Blessed be thy holy name, thou hast provided for the comfort as well as the security of thy people, while yet in the house of their pilgrimage. We beseech thee, leave us not comfortless, but send thy Holy Ghost to comfort us, and to assure our hearts that we are personally interested in that everlasting covenant which is ordered in all things and sure. May we give all diligence to make our calling and election sure. May we have the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. May we know that we have passed from death unto life. Grant that, by true faith, we may be indeed thy children; and oh! send forth the Spirit of thy Son into our hearts, enabling us to cry, Abba, Father. May we hear the voice of thy love, and know from sweet experience the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. We live in a dying world. It is appointed for us once to die. The years of our pilgrimage will soon be accomplished; we must stand on the brink of Jordan; and it will be said to each of us, Thou art this day to pass over. What a strange moment will that be! We have not passed this way heretofore. But though

we have not, thou, O God our Saviour, hast passed it before, and passed it for us. Thou hast tasted death for every man. When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Thou art the resurrection and the life; and whosoever liveth and believeth in thee shall not die eternally. Lord, we believe this; help thou our unbelief. Oh, grant, that by a lively and steadfast faith in thy precious death and glorious resurrection, we may be more than conquerors over the last enemy! Hast not thou, by thine own death, destroyed him that had the power of death? and dost not thou deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage? Lord, grant, that when we come to die, we may see thy footprints, and hear thy voice, and find thy presence in the gloomy vale. Then, though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil, if thou art with us. Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty Father, that through the grave and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection, through Him who died and was buried, and rose again, thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

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LECTURE XXII.

CROSSING OVER JORDAN.

WHY should we start, and fear to die !
What timorous worms we mortals are !
Death is the gate to endless joy,
And yet we dread to enter there.

The pains, the groans and dying strife
Fright our approaching souls away ;
Still we shrink back again to life,
Fond of our prison and our clay.

Oh ! if my Lord would come and meet,
My soul would stretch her wings in haste,
Fly fearless through death's iron gate,
Nor feel the terrors as she passed.

Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.

ACTS xxvii. 44.

AND SO IT CAME TO PASS, THAT THEY ESCAPED ALL SAFE TO LAND.

THE Christian's experience in the world, on his way to heaven, may be likened to a voyage by sea, as well as to a journey by land. The words just read refer to the wonderful preservation of St. Paul and his fellow-passengers, after the dreadful shipwreck they had encountered. We may apply them to all true believers and their safe arrival on the heavenly shore, after all the dangers and narrow escapes they have had on their way thither. Diffi-

culties in the way to heaven, by no means imply that there is any uncertainty as to the final salvation of genuine penitents. Very different is the manner in which different believers pursue and finish their course. A few, to the outward eye, appear almost exempt from the perils and dangers in which others are constantly involved. They have fine weather and prosperous gales; and, after a straight course and plain sailing, they come, as it were with full sail and flying colours, to the fair haven of everlasting rest. But how different is the experience of others! I had almost said, of the generality. Before they get to heaven, they are

“Temptation tossed and half a wreck.”

Their experience is a counterpart of what befell St. Paul and his comrades in that memorable voyage. They have scarcely loosed from harbour, before they find themselves launched in a sea of troubles. They are crossed by disappointment and involved in perplexity. The sea is rough and the wind contrary. The blast of temptation bears hard upon them, and the quicksands of error seem ready to swallow them up. They have to suffer the loss of all things, just as that ship's company had to throw all their goods overboard. Their course is often in the dark; sailing is dangerous, and for many days neither sun nor stars appear, to rejoice their heart, or direct their way. Sometimes they are driven to the very verge of despair; and to their trembling apprehension, all hope that they shall be saved is taken away. But notwithstanding all these fears and all these calamities, if they are true believers in the Son of God, the promise and the oath of the Father, the mercy and the love of the Son, and the grace

and the power of the eternal Spirit, are pledged alike for their preservation unto eternal life. But He who has appointed them unto salvation as their end, has appointed also the means by which that salvation is to be secured. After Paul had assured the company that not one of them should be lost, when the sailors were about to desert the vessel and leave the passengers to the sinking ship, he did not hesitate to say, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." God's providence had arranged that the ship's company should be saved by the instrumentality of the sailors. So it is with regard to faith and prayer and obedience. These are the things that accompany salvation. Except these abide in the ship, you cannot be saved. Let these be in you, and abide, and your salvation is certain. After all your perils and dangers and narrow escapes, you shall land safely every one on the heavenly shore—just as it was with the two hundred threescore and sixteen souls on board that ship, when the wished-for dawn appeared. They that could swim, first cast themselves into the sea, and got to land: and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. "And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."

We have at present to consider how the different members of the company of pilgrims were enabled to cross the river, and escaped all safe to the heavenly land.

1. The next pilgrim who was summoned beyond the river, after Christiana, was poor Ready-to-halt. A messenger was sent expressly to him. And this was the message which he delivered, when he found him out, and stood before him:—"I am come to

thee in the name of Him whom thou hast loved and followed, though upon crutches; and my message is to tell thee, that he expects thee at his table on such a day: wherefore prepare thyself for thy journey." The bearer of this message then gave his token, to prove that he was a true messenger. "I have broken," he said, "the golden bowl, and loosed the silver cord." He to whom this affecting token was delivered, and to whom this solemn message was addressed, was enabled to receive them both without dismay. He called for his fellow-pilgrims, and told them what was before him. He had no worldly cares to perplex his mind,—no affairs to settle at such a time. He had only his crutches and his good wishes to leave behind. Both these he bequeathed to his son who should tread in his steps. He paid his grateful acknowledgments to the faithful guide who had conducted him, with so much wisdom and forbearance to his infirmity. He said, had he been treated in a different manner, by reason of his lameness, instead of being healed, he knew that he should have been turned out of the way. When he came to the brink of the river, before he had actually entered it, with a beaming countenance he threw away his crutches, and said—"Now I shall no longer have need of these. Lo, yonder are chariots with horses, in which I am to ride!" The last words which he uttered were, "Welcome, life!" So he escaped safe to land.

All this, dear brethren, is deeply affecting, and full of encouragement to us who are yet on the wilderness side of the river. Have any of you the testimony of your conscience that you love the Saviour in sincerity, while you are so deeply con-

scious of your peculiar and special infirmity that you are sure your obedience has been very lame, and you appear to have been following, as it were, upon crutches? Well, only strive against your peculiar infirmity; follow as you can, if not as you would. Go with your crutches, if you cannot go without them. Derive all the benefit you possibly can from every providential help that is mercifully afforded you by the way, to the very end of your course. Especially value the ministration of the word, Christian fellowship, and the communications of those who walk charitably, and know how to make every allowance for the infirmities of the weak. By these you will be encouraged to hold on your way even to the end. But oh, remember a time is coming—it may be very near—when an express messenger will be sent to assure you that the time of your departure is at hand. As if an angel spoke, or a messenger from the invisible world had been sent to you, the breaking up of your mortal tabernacle, which is so fearfully and wonderfully made, will say to you, “Prepare thyself for thy journey!” Oh, do not have much preparatory work to perform then! When the golden bowl is broken and the silver cord is loosed, what a time is that, what an unseasonable time to have much to do—any thing to do—either for this world or the next! Oh, live now, and pass through the world with your journey’s end constantly before you, that when the Master cometh and knocketh, you may open to him immediately. “Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.” Then you will be delivered from all your infirmities—then you will need no longer the props and helps

and advantages which have hitherto been so necessary for you. With such a prospect as this, who would not cry at the end of his weary pilgrimage, "Welcome, life?"

2. The next summons that came was for Feeblemind. The post came and sounded his horn at his chamber-door. Then was the King's pleasure made known to this poor trembling pilgrim—that in a few days he must launch away, and stand in the King's palace, which is on the other side of the river. And this was the token left by the messenger that he spoke the truth, and that at the appointed time his words should be verified:—He waved his hand,—“and those that look out of the windows were darkened.” Then Feeblemind sent for his friends, and told them the message he had received, and pointed to the token which he now possessed. He had nothing to leave, he said, but his infirmity behind; and this he knew was no legacy to bequeath even to the poorest pilgrim, as it could only impede their progress and vex their souls from day to day. He therefore charged his friends neither to keep it themselves nor to give it to any one; but to throw it away. This done, and the day being come in which he was to depart, he entered the river as the rest. His last words were, “Hold out, faith and patience!” So he escaped safe to land.

After this the summons came for two individuals, that were nearly related to Feeblemind, and therefore we may well class them together with him. Despondency and his daughter Much-afraid were informed that their time was come. Close companions had they been through life, and now in death they were

not divided. This was the message delivered to Despondency :—" Trembling man, by next Lord's-day be ready for the King ! On that day thou shalt shout for joy, because thou art delivered from all thy fears and from all thy doubtings." This said, the messenger breathed in the face of him he addressed ; and lo ! the grasshopper became a burden. This message and token were given alike both to father and daughter. Then did they humbly acknowledge to their friends, how sadly they had both betrayed their infirmity through every part of their journey, and what a large demand they had made upon the forbearance and charity of their companions. Earnestly did they exhort the pilgrims they were leaving, to give no entertainment to the desponding doubts and unbelieving fears by which they two had been so closely assailed, and by reason of which they had so often walked uncomfortably and in darkness. When the time was actually come for them to be gone, they came up to the brink of the water. The last words of Despondency were, " Farewell, night—welcome, day !" Still more surprised were the bystanders, at the deportment of Much-afraid at that solemn hour. She actually went through the river singing, but none could understand what she said. So they escaped both safe to land.

Oh, my brethren, if people are only true of heart, if they are truly penitent for their sins, and rest by simple faith on Christ to save them, however grievous may be their infirmities, and however slow and uncomfortable may have been their progress, it shall surely be well with them in the end. The King of the Celestial City is a merciful king. If you humbly put your trust in him and love him in sincerity, why

should you ever yield to despondency? Have you not a compassionate High-priest, who is touched with the feeling of your infirmity? Does he not know your frame? Does he not consider that you are dust? Oh remember in all your straits and trials and conflicts,

“Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power:
He is able—he is willing.
Doubt no more!”

However feeble may be your mind, however sad at times may be your despondency, and however much you may sometimes be afraid, only lean upon his almighty arm, and plead his unchanging promise, and expect his continual help, and you shall not be disappointed. “His grace will be sufficient for you; his strength will be perfected in your weakness.” However painfully you may be exercised by the way, only cleave unto him with a perfect heart, and when your course is finished, perhaps while it is finishing, he will show you, that having loved his own which were in the world, he loves them to the end! In a little while he will send to fetch you—that where he is, there you may be also. The messenger by which he sends to summon you may at first startle you. When the post that has travelled from the invisible world shall stop at your dwelling, and blow his horn and knock at your door, a solemn sensation may pervade your mind. And when he produces the order which cannot be reversed, and delivers the token which cannot be disputed—“when those that look out of the windows are darkened, and the grasshopper shall be a burden”—when sight and memory and understanding shall all grow dim—when heart and flesh shall fail, and the slightest

sound, or the lightest touch, shall be more than you can bear—then you shall begin to understand the unspeakable advantage of having such a Saviour as Christ for your friend in such a time! Then you will have nothing to do but to leave all your feebleness, all your doubtfulness and all your fearfulness behind! And oh, if the Conqueror of death and hell meet with you in the gloomy vale, and especially manifest himself to you when you are passing through the waters, will not faith and patience then hold out to the end? Will not your last words be, Farewell, night—welcome, day? Or may you not even be privileged, after all your terrible fears, to pass into eternity singing?—but withal, singing what none who remain on this side the river are able to comprehend, because you have got a glimpse of the glory to be revealed, are beginning the language of paradise, and have “heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

3. Next came the summons for good Mr. Honest. He was charged, on such a day fortnight, to present himself before his Lord at his Father's house. And this was the token:—The messenger stamped with his foot upon the ground, “and all the daughters of music were brought low.” Then said this excellent pilgrim, “Behold I die!” He made, however, no will; for that which had been his special treasure, the peculiar ornament of his profession, and the distinguishing feature in his character, his downright honesty, *i. e.* his Christian simplicity and godly sincerity—this he took with him to the country where he was going. He intimated his desire that this circumstance should be told to those who came after. When he came to the river's brink, his friends

noticed with much dismay that, at that time, the river had overflowed all its banks. They feared, therefore, that he was like to have a very terrible passage. And so it would indeed have proved with almost any other person. But from the day when he first set out on pilgrimage, the individual now to go over had seriously considered this day, and made the best possible provision against it. He made a solemn agreement with one Good Conscience to meet him by that river, to stand by him, and to give him all the comfort and help which his presence could afford. This agreement he renewed and confirmed from day to day. Good Conscience did not fail to appear. He came, according to the agreement, to cheer and assist his friend in his extremity. Thus, though the river was very high,—though the waters roared and were troubled,—though the waves swelled and tossed, what with the encouraging voice of Good Conscience, which sounded like the sweetest music, and what with the friendly aid which he afforded—for he lent his hand—he was supported and kept up until he had clean passed over. His last words were—"Grace reigns!" So he escaped safe to land.

Dear brethren, let us every one be excited to take a leaf out of the book of this excellent pilgrim. Let us think of our dying day, as he did, while death may be distant; and let us prepare for a safe passage over the river, in the same manner that he did. A time is coming when all the pleasant voices to which we have ever listened with delight will cease to charm. The voice of praise, the voice of flattery, the voice of melody, will all strike in vain upon the dull cold ear of death. But amid the utter impotence of all these, either to soothe or to cheer us,

there is a voice which will sound like the sweetest music in the chamber of death—a hand that can keep us from sinking in the deepest waters. Oh, let us every one agree quickly with a good conscience, and engage it to meet us and to give us its testimony and its services in the hour of death. How is such an invaluable friend to be got? How are these precious services to be secured? They can only be obtained by a personal application of the atoning blood of Christ to the heart by faith. “Shall not the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” And they can only be retained by continual watchfulness and prayer, daily striving against sin and habitually keeping before us the judgment of the great day, and the solemn scrutiny which will then be made of all our secret works and ways and doings. Oh! come again and again to wash in the fountain open for sin and for uncleanness; pray and long every day for the renewal of your heart by the power of the Holy Ghost; and herein do you exercise yourself, to have always a conscience void of offence both towards God and towards man. Just in proportion to the simplicity of your faith in Christ, and the integrity and uprightness of your walk and conversation, may you rely upon the presence and help of a good conscience to soothe and support you on the bed of death. “Mark the upright, and behold the perfect man; for the end of that man is peace.” Remember, it is not coming once to Christ that can assure us of comfort upon the bed of death. We must daily apply to him to be cleansed from all unrighteousness; and we must daily seek, through

the renewal of the Holy Ghost, to be made like unto him in righteousness and true holiness. "The righteous hath hope in his death." We must watch and pray against every deviation from the right path, and constantly press forward in the way of obedience. "Keep innocency, and do the thing which is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last." They whose religion is of the most practical kind, and who have laboured most zealously to rule their lives by the commandments of God, will ever be foremost to proclaim with their dying breath, "Grace reigns !"

4. There are yet two pilgrims more whom we have to see beyond the river, and then we bring the subject to a close. Valiant and Standfast are the individuals I mean. As these were evidently men of a kindred spirit, we may refer to their departure at one glance, although the summons for each came at a separate time. The messenger who brought word to Valiant that the time of his departure was at hand, confirmed his message with this token,—he gently touched the place of his heart. Then said Valiant, "The pitcher is broken at the fountain." He told his friends that he was going to his Father ; and that, though he had met with many troubles by the way, he did not now repent of one of them. His sword he left to him that came after him, and his skill and courage to those who could get them. As for the scars which he had received, he carried them with him into the better land, as a witness that he had fought the good fight and had not disgraced the worthy name by which he was called, but had indeed been Valiant-for-truth. As soon as he entered the river, he said, "O death ! where is thy sting?"

And as he went down deeper, again he said, "O grave! where is thy victory?" All the trumpets sounded for him on the opposite shore. "So he escaped safe to land."

If possible, still more triumphantly did his brother Standfast finish his course. Message was brought him that his Master had sent for him from that distant province, to go and enter into the King's palace. Upon this, for a moment, he began to muse. Then did the messenger produce his token, and, lifting up his hand to heaven, he said, "The wheel is broken at the cistern." Then did Standfast leave a solemn and affecting message, to be delivered by the guide to those of his kindred whom he was unable to see, and who had not as yet taken to the pilgrim's life. "Tell them," he said, "of my happy arrival at this place, and the blessed condition in which I am." When he entered the river, there was a very great calm. Not a breath was felt to disturb the air; not a ripple was seen to curl the water. The enemy was as still as a stone. Every thing was so fair and calm and still, that when this eminent pilgrim was about halfway over, he stood for a while and talked to his companions who had accompanied him to the edge of the water. "This river," he said, "has been a terror to many; yea, the thoughts of it have often frightened me. But now I stand easy and in perfect peace. The waters indeed taste bitter and feel cold, but when I think where I am going, and see the conductors that are waiting for me on the other side, it lies as a glowing coal upon my heart. I see myself now at the end of my journey. My toilsome days are ended. I am going to see that head which was crowned with thorns, and

that face which was spit upon for me. Hitherto I have lived by hearsay and by faith; but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with him in whose company I delight. I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of, and wherever I have seen the print of his foot, there I have tried to set my feet. His name has been to me as ointment poured forth; yea, sweeter than all perfumes. His voice to me has been most sweet, and his countenance I have more desired than they that have most desired the light of the sun! I have gathered his words as my food, and used them as remedies for all my ailments. He has led me and kept me from mine iniquities; yea, my steps have been strengthened in his way." Thus as he was discoursing in the midst of the river, his countenance changed; the strong man bowed under him. After that he said, "Take me, for I come to thee!" Then his friends saw him no more. So he landed—his was not an escape—he landed safe on the opposite shore. And glorious it was to see how the open region was filled with horses and chariots, with trumpeters and pipers, with singers and players on stringed instruments, to welcome the pilgrims as they went up, and followed one another in at the beautiful gate of the city.

Oh! my brethren, which of us can listen to this glowing description of an eminent pilgrim's end, and not feel our hearts burn within us? Which of us can listen to it, and not cry out, (I hope, with more sincerity than he who first said so,) "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" Well, then, constantly bear in mind, that in order to be like those at the last, whose end we so greatly covet, we must partake of their principles

and imitate their lives. It was Valiant-for-truth who said in the water, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?" It was Standfast—the man who was found on his knees in the Enchanted Ground—that was able to stand in the middle of Jordan, and to speak to his friends in the manner we have seen. If, therefore, you would have peace at the last, oh! receive the truth in the love of it. Be faithful to it; be valiant for it. "Stand fast in the faith; quit you like men; be strong." Abound always in fervent prayer to Him who sees in secret, that you may walk safely over the enchanted ground of this sinful world, and be kept unhurt by all the delusions and baubles by which others are taken. If this be really your state and conduct, you have nothing to fear. You may receive the intimation of your approaching end without terror or dismay. And however bitter the waters of Jordan may taste, or however chilly they may feel; whatever weather you may have when you cross, or however little you may be able to say at the solemn hour, it shall surely be well with you at the last! You shall never taste of the second death; you shall escape all safe to the better land!

But if you are yet in your unconverted state, if you are living in sin, if you have made no serious preparation for the world to come, oh! say, how will you do in the swelling of Jordan? Consider how soon you may be hurried to the water's brink, and how little can be done when the tokens of your change are evidently before you. Consider seriously your latter end. Forsake your sin. Ask for the Holy Spirit. Apply to Christ. Live to God. And do this now. Now is the accepted time. Do it

while the evil days come not ! Do it before it must be left undone for ever ! “ Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was : and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

HYMN.

GREAT God, thy way is in the sea,
Thy footsteps in the deep ;
O'er unknown depths we pass to thee,
And trackless oceans sweep ;
Yet all thy saints, their dangers past,
Shall safely reach the land at last.

What though the gales of trouble rise,
And drift our souls afar ;
Though vain we search the darkened skies,
For sun, or moon, or star—
We shall not perish in the blast,
But reach the heavenly shore at last.

What though the creaking bark be tossed,
And loud the tempest rave,—
To trembling sight though all be lost,
And none be near to save—
Yet through the storm, though loud it roar,
We still shall reach the heavenly shore.

The whirling winds may wildly crash,
And rage without control ;
And all the waves and billows dash,
Terrific, o'er the soul ;
But still, on plank, or wreck, or oar,
We all shall safely reach the shore.

Almighty God, both earth and sea
Confess thy sovereign sway ;
All nature hears thy wise decree,
And winds and waves obey ;

Oh! let thy heavenly grace control
The storms and fears that toss my soul.

Oh! give me, Lord, the honest heart,
And valiant let me prove;
That firm and steadfast faith impart,
Which tempests cannot move;
So shall I reach, my perils over,
In peace and joy the heavenly shore.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity; we bless thy holy name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beseeching thee to give us grace so to follow their good example, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom. May we all be prepared to meet our God. May we seriously apply our hearts to that holy and heavenly wisdom while we live here, which may in the end bring us to everlasting life, through the merits of Jesus Christ, thine only Son our Lord. Oh, grant that we may be found ready, at whatever hour, or in whatever way, thou mayest be pleased to call us hence. May we know in this our day the things which belong to our peace, before they are for ever hid from our eyes. Let our souls be precious in thy sight. Wash them, we pray thee, in the blood of that immaculate Lamb that was slain to take away the sins of the world, that whatsoever defilements they may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and sinful world, through the lusts of the flesh, or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, they may be presented pure and without spot before thee. May we meet death, not as the king of terrors, but as a messenger of peace. Land us safe on that happy shore where none of our corruptions will vex us again, and none of our grievous infirmities will be felt any longer. May we welcome life in thy blissful presence, when thou wilt make our feet like harts' feet, and set them upon high places, where they will never be ready to halt again. Set us before thy glorious face for ever, where we shall complain no more of a feeble mind, and where none of our desponding thoughts and none of our distressing fears can ever come. Grant us grace so to follow thy blessed saints in all

virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee. Oh! that we may receive thy word in a good and honest heart, and understand it and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience! And may we have the testimony of our conscience, both now and at the last, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, by thy grace, we have had our conversation in the world. Oh! make us valiant for truth, that when the time of our departure shall come, we may be able to testify, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day. And, finally, do thou give us thy heavenly grace, that we may stand fast in the faith, and, being faithful unto death, may then receive a crown of life. Oh! save us in the hour of death, and enable us then to glorify thy holy name, by proclaiming thy loving-kindness, thy faithfulness and truth. All this we ask in the name and for the merits of Jesus Christ, our most blessed Lord and Saviour.

LECTURE XXIII.

CONCLUSION.

As when the weary traveller gains
The height of some o'erlooking hill,
His heart revives, if 'cross the plains
He eyes his home, though distant still.
While he surveys the much-loved spot,
He slights the space that lies between;
His past fatigues are now forgot,
Because his journey's end is seen.
Thus, when the Christian pilgrim views,
By faith, his mansions in the skies,
The sight his fainting strength renews,
And wings his speed to reach the prize.
The thought of home his spirit cheers;
No more he grieves for troubles past;
Nor any future trial fears,
So he may safe arrive at last.
'Tis there, he says, I am to dwell
With Jesus in the realms of day;
Then I shall bid my cares farewell,
And he shall wipe my tears away.
Jesus, on thee our hope depends,
To lead us on to thine abode;
Assured our home will make amends
For all our toil while on the road.

NUMBERS X. 29.

WE ARE JOURNEYING UNTO THE PLACE OF WHICH THE LORD SAID, I WILL GIVE
IT YOU: COME THOU WITH US, AND WE WILL DO THEE GOOD; FOR THE LORD
HATH SPOKEN GOOD CONCERNING ISRAEL.

THE journeying of the children of Israel, from the
time of their departure out of Egypt, to the day
when they crossed over Jordan and took possession
of Canaan, affords us the happiest emblem of the

Christian's life. It sets before us, in colours which can never be effaced, not only the rise and progress of religion in the soul, but the blessed termination of all the believer's labours and sorrows, when he has passed the boundary of time, and obtained possession in heaven of the glorious inheritance. How cruel was the bondage under which Israel groaned, before they were delivered with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm ! How glorious was the rescue which was wrought for them ; and how pleasant was the land (a land which was the glory of all lands) that was promised as the lot of their inheritance ! How varied was the travail that befell them by the way ! They had to pass through a great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery flying serpents. Sometimes they had to climb up the steepest hills, and sometimes to descend into the deepest vales. At one time they had to contend with the most powerful adversaries ; and at another, they were suffered to march forward with little opposition. Occasionally they lighted on pleasant places, where they lingered with joy ; but more frequently their way was through a desert region, which could not be passed without toil and difficulty. At one time they made the wilderness and the solitary place to echo with their songs of praise ; but more frequently it resounded with their rebellious murmurs when difficulties arose, and with their cries of misery when, because of their provocation, the fire of Divine wrath was kindled among them. But, because they had a promised rest in view, amid all their labours and toils, every true Israelite might say to each individual whom he met, if at all disposed to be associated with the people of the Lord : " We are journeying unto the

place of which the Lord said, I will give it you : Come thou with us, and we will do thee good : for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel."

This text has been selected, that I may give you, in a single lecture, a summary of the most important instruction contained in the pilgrimage of Christiana and her fellow-travellers. The journey of one individual to the Celestial City sets before us many solemn and affecting truths. We are now going to review the journey of a whole family over the same ground to the same city. Let us keep in mind that the children of Israel were one family. They came out of Egypt with their young and their old ; neither was a hoof left behind. Oh, happy families, to whom this applies in a spiritual sense—who are indeed travelling all together, with their young and their old, to the heavenly Canaan ! How powerful is the invitation given by any member of such a family, to any one whom he meets in this worldly wilderness, as yet unassociated with the household of faith and the Israel of God ! He can say—and how persuasive are his words !—"Cast in thy lot with us. We are journeying to the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you : Come thou with us, and we will do thee good : for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." We shall consider,

I. The setting out of a whole family for a distant country.

II. The travail and toil which they met by the way ; and,

III. The good which they found at the end of their journey.

I. Let us consider, first, the setting out of a whole

family for a distant place. A certain man had left his native town, and taken his journey into a very far country. The reasons which had induced him to make that journey were most weighty. He could not at all get on or be happy where he was. He had received information that the town where he lived would be burnt up. He was oppressed very much, and became perfectly miserable. But he heard of a land a great way off, where he might live in ease and plenty, and unhurt by the convulsion that was shortly to overthrow his native place. He believed this report, and determined to act upon it. He had a wife and a large family. He told them his fears and his determination, and earnestly strove to persuade every one of them to emigrate with him. But they had only laughed at his fears; prayed him to be quiet and act like other people; and declared that, for their part, they were quite content where they were, and had not the least intention of setting out on such a journey. Thus repulsed, and finding foes in his own house, the poor man had been constrained to set out alone. After a long and tedious journey, many surprising adventures, many narrow escapes both by land and water, and many a desperate encounter with giants and thieves and robbers; but, withal, after many a signal deliverance, many a happy hour, and many a sweet refreshment by the way, the weather-beaten traveller at length had safely arrived at the country for which he set out. When he actually saw that good land with his eyes, and was admitted to all the privileges enjoyed by the happy citizens of that region, he confessed that one-half of its glories had not been told him; and that he had received doubly, nay, a hundred-fold, for all that he had relinquished at his first setting

out, and for all the toils and conflicts which he had endured by the way. The report of Christian's journey was brought back to the town from whence he had set out, and noised throughout all that region. The sensation which it produced was very great. Many heard both an exaggerated and a false account of the pilgrim and his progress. Some said that he was out of his mind, and that he ran headlong into a pool of mud, where he certainly perished, at his first setting out; others declared that he was killed by a flash of lightning, close by a mountain-side; others said that Apollyon had met him, and taken him away; and others, that his foot had slipped while crossing a dark glen, and that he had never been heard of since. This was denied by others, who asserted that with their own eyes they had seen him executed for sedition in the town of Vanity. Another rumour was, that he had been confined in a dark and gloomy prison, where he received such cruel treatment that he had died by his own hand. But this report was again contradicted by others, who confidently affirmed, that nearly at the end of his journey, after undergoing incredible hardships, as he was crossing a deep and rapid river, he was there drowned, while in great terror and distress of mind. Thus did the generality count his life to be madness and his end without honour. But amid all these conflicting reports, the true history was also faithfully reported by others.

The true report of every thing just as it occurred was brought to the ears of his wife, and most surprising was the effect it had upon her. She began to cry like a little child. Her emotion was such, that it seemed as if her heart was going to break. She

bitterly reflected upon her past behaviour ; and the manner she had acted towards him, who was now so far removed out of her sight. "I will join him," she said ; "yes ! I will go to him in that happy country where he is settled, or else I will die in making the attempt." This was not a sudden burst of feeling, which passed over and was gone ; it was the settled purpose of her heart. And having received an encouraging letter, which assured her what a kind welcome she would receive, she began at once to act upon her resolution. She called all her family together, told them her design, and what had induced her to form it. As she spake, with many tears, of her opposition to him that was gone, the children sobbed out aloud. But when she told them the dangers he had escaped, and described the happy country in which he now dwelt ; and withal, when she showed them the letter which he had sent, urging both her and them, without any delay, to set out for that distant country, they all clapped their hands for joy, and said with one voice, "Mother, let us set out directly to go to our father." They did begin to pack up, and to make preparations for going directly. While thus engaged, two neighbours, Timorous and Mercy, came to discourage them. But the interview ended in Mercy resolving to set out with them, while the other returned to discourse upon the folly by which they were moved. They all, therefore, started together, in the direction for the little narrow gate. The young person who had joined their company was afraid of being thought an intruder, as she had no special invitation. But Christiana said, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good." The whole party went across the

plain until they arrived at the gate at the head of the way. They had found the steps across the boggy ground, and thus escaped the distress and anguish of wading or sinking in that place. To every one of them, after they had knocked long and loud, the gate was opened; though some of them had well-nigh fainted, and all of them had been greatly terrified by the loud barking of a huge dog, hard by, which made them tremble, as they approached. Having passed the gate, they were all well received by the man who kept it; and from him they obtained the direction they needed to the Interpreter's house. As they journeyed forward, one of the children, unnoticed by the elders, ate some fruit which hung over the wall from the neighbouring orchard. The orchard belonged to the man who was also the owner of the dog which had barked so loudly. When they came to the mansion where the Interpreter resided, they had for some time to stand watching and waiting at the posts of his house. But at length the door was opened; and there was great joy throughout all the house as soon as it was known who sought admittance. The Interpreter acted with wonderful kindness to all the party; and great was the tenderness and condescension which he observed to the little children. He did not disdain to be the instructor of the least among them. He took them all to his bath, in which they were severally washed with pure water; then did he put his mark, and set his seal upon them; and lastly, at their request, he put them under the guidance and protection of a valiant servant of his own, who had orders to conduct them straight to the House Beautiful.

The faithful guide undertook the task, and conducted the whole party direct to a certain cross, with a sepulchre adjoining. It was here that Christian's burden had fallen from him, and tumbled into the sepulchre. The guide said there was no way to the Celestial City but by this cross, and that it was his main business and principal concern to bring men here. From the same rock out of which the sepulchre was hewn, there gushed up an inexhaustible spring of the purest and most refreshing water. Its properties were such that it not only effectually took out all the stains upon the most defiled garments, but when the souls of the pilgrims are ready to faint, it revives and cheers them, and enables them to lift up their drooping head, and to go on their way rejoicing. This spring, the guide assured our pilgrims, would follow them through every part of their journey, until they arrived at the country which they were seeking; for it communicates with that land, and empties itself into the shining rivers which flow there for ever and ever. Its course, he said, cannot always be traced; but every pool at which you will ever stay to wash your garments—every well out of which you will ever draw water for your refreshment by the way, and for the renewal of your strength—all these pools and all these wells are replenished and filled with water from the spring that rises out of that rock. The whole party lingered in this place for some time, with weeping and supplication, and joy and gladness, and felt now, from the least even to the greatest, that they were indeed journeying to the place where they desired to be.

Here let us pause to receive instruction. Oh, that we could see more of family religion flourishing about

us ! Oh, that we could hear heads of families, with their children, and all that appertain to them, saying, "We are journeying to the place of which the Lord hath said, I will give it you." There can never be a general or any extensive revival of true religion, until the power of vital godliness is exemplified in families. If we are blessed with faithful Abraham, like him we shall command our children and our household after us, to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon us that of which he has spoken. If, like Joshua, we follow the Lord fully, like him we shall determine, not only for ourselves but also for our house, that we will serve the Lord. When we set out to serve the Lord, the prince of darkness, like cruel Pharaoh, would labour hard to keep our little ones in bondage ; but, like Moses the man of God, we must say, "We will go with our young and our old, with our sons and our daughters will we go. But if it be asked, how all the various members of a family are to be bowed as the heart of one man ? We answer, By God's blessing upon prompt decision, a proper use of authority, and persevering prayer, the most wondrous things will be brought to pass. Try this, and in due time it will be evident that you are the blessed of the Lord, you, and your children with you. If those about whom you are interested should refuse at first to hearken to you, do not compromise your principles, and linger and stay, in the vain hope of winning them to your views, by conforming to their unlawful or doubtful pursuits ; but act as Christian did at the first, with prompt decision. Set out alone, if you cannot induce others to set out with you. Your example afterwards may have a

far more powerful effect than your persuasions have at present. But do not hesitate to make a proper use of the authority which has been committed to you over others. State clearly your views and your determination to every individual with whom you have influence, and say, "Go thou with us;" and never cease your supplications to Him who has all hearts at his disposal, to exert His gracious influence upon all that belong to you. This do, and you will often find difficulties vanish in a way that you never expected, and sometimes cheerful compliance where you looked for opposition. The main difficulty is, for you yourself to feel deeply, and to act uprightly. And how are you to be brought to such a state as this?

Have you any pious relative, or do you know any eminent Christian, who has gone before you to the better land? Do not listen to the idle tales or foolish reports which are made of the life and death of the Lord's people, by such as are walking according to the course of this world: but consider how they are represented in the true sayings of God. These assure you that they are abundantly recompensed for all the sorrows and trials and conflicts which they encountered by the way—that they were delivered and supported in all their many troubles; that they have arrived safe at their happy home, and that they are obliged to own that not half of the beauty and glory and blessedness of heaven had been reported to them.

"From all their labours now they rest,
In God's eternal glory blessed;
The tear is wiped from every eye,
And sorrow yields to endless joy."

Oh ! my brethren, every saint in glory sends, as it were, a letter of invitation to his friends and relatives on earth, beseeching them to follow his footsteps to that blissful world. "He, being dead, yet speaketh." And will you give no heed to what he says? Will you make light of the invitation? Will you ungratefully scorn

"Their posthumous advice and pious prayer!"

Awake, thou that sleepest. Shake off your drowsiness. Be followers of them who, through faith and patience, now inherit the promises. Ask the way to Zion with your faces thitherward. Resolve that you will reach that happy land, or else will die in the attempt to do so! Arise and depart, for this is not your rest. Take also your little ones, and be gone. Do not linger in all the plain. Strive to enter in at the strait gate. You cannot take a step on the way to heaven if you refuse to renounce the sins and pleasures and vanities and delusions of this present evil world. Leave these behind you; then knock at mercy's gate, and it shall be opened unto you. Be not deterred by any adversary that would hinder your prayers. And never think that you have effectually and indeed set out for heaven, until you have experienced the gracious teaching of the Holy Spirit, and have obtained some experimental acquaintance with Him who was delivered unto death for our offences, and rose again from the grave to restore unto us everlasting life. Seek the Holy Spirit's influence for your children as well as for yourselves. He does not deny his grace and mercy to such little ones, but sometimes sanctifies them from the womb. Value the instructions of faithful minis-

ters, and submit unreservedly to all that they urge upon you from the sure word of God. Those who preach Christ Jesus the Lord, and who refer you to the oracles of God for all that they urge upon you, alone are the true guides to the Celestial City.

II. We pass on from the setting out of these travellers to consider the toil which they encountered by the way. This happy family soon set out under the conduct of their faithful guide to proceed forward. Not long after they had left the house of the Interpreter they beheld those three men, Simple, Sloth, and Presumption, hung up in chains as an example to others. These were the men who were asleep when Christian had passed by that way a little while before. When they came to the steep hill of Difficulty, it was a hard task, especially for the little ones, to toil up it. But being supported by the guide, they did not faint. They came to the harbour where Christian had lost his evidence, and, warned by his example, acted there with great circumspection. As they approached the house Beautiful, they found another example had been made of those men who brought an evil report of the land. Timorous and Slothful had perished by the way, and could no longer discourage the heart of pilgrims by their fearful tales. The whole party were joyfully received into the house Beautiful; and there, one of the inmates, whose name was Prudence, catechised the children, and found that they had been instructed well in all those things which are necessary for pilgrims to know. While they remained in this house, one of the party firmly rejected an overture that was made, to be unequally

yoked with an unbeliever; and in another, the effects of forbidden fruit, which he had formerly eaten, most painfully appeared. But this disease was healed by the application of suitable remedies. The benefits and instructions which all the travellers received while remaining at this house were very great. Here they obtained, upon their own petition, the services of the guide to go with them to the end of their journey. In passing through the Valley of Humiliation, where Christian had been so fiercely assaulted, they met with nothing to molest them, but found it a pleasant place. When they entered the dismal cavern that introduced them to the Region of Darkness, they all confessed that it was a dreadful place; but, at length, they passed safely through it, and were all brought into a wealthy place. In their further progress, many adversaries and giants and monsters came forth to resist them and to obstruct their way; but by the skill and valour of their wise conductor, and their strict adherence to his directions, not one of these could prevail against them. The individuals that they met, or overtook in the way, were of the most opposite kind. From Honest and Fearing and Gaius and Mnason and Standfast they received the most important benefits. Many of these joined their company, and they did them good as well as received good from them. They were shown what to avoid in Self-will. In the house of Mnason, an old disciple, they were sheltered from the temptations of Vanity Fair. Most edifying was the conversation which they heard from the friends of Mnason. When, at length, they arrived at the Delectable Mountains, they killed Despair, and demolished the

castle in which so many pilgrims had often been confined.

All this, my brethren, represents to us the experience of real Christians, as they go forward on their heavenly way. True Christians often behold the simple and the fearful, who hated instruction, made affecting instances of God's righteous displeasure against sin. Oh! consider, that though God bears long with sinners, he will not bear always. "If a man will not turn, he hath whet his sword and bent his bow and made it ready." If you now trifle with your convictions, or through sinful fear of man refuse to confess the faith of Christ crucified, in a little while you may be made an example to deter others from following the steps in which you trod. We have already mentioned that entering the house Beautiful represents to us joining the visible church of Christ. Let all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity consider seriously the great advantage of communion and fellowship with other Christians. Do not pass by this fair place. The Hill of Zion is a fair place, beautiful for situation, and the joy of the whole earth. Do not scruple unreservedly to cast in your lot among the true soldiers and servants of Christ, and never despise the precious benefits which are to be obtained in the sanctuary of God. "There the Lord hath promised the blessing, even life for evermore." If you attend upon ordinances, and join the society of true believers, in a proper frame of mind, you will find the benefits and privileges that are to be found there. You and your little ones will there be trained in the heavenly way. You will be enabled to resist the most flattering prospects which would allure you from the nar-

row way. Your past transgressions will be brought to your mind and cause you to sorrow after a godly sort. There, in answer to your humble petitions, faithful pastors will be granted to you, to guide and direct you to your journey's end. Do not think that you are not in the way to heaven, if you are mercifully preserved from the sore conflicts with your adversary the devil, which many eminent Christians have had to endure. Walk humbly, and you shall walk securely. Satan has no power at all against the humble souls that exercise simple and unwavering faith in the power and truth of God. His sorest temptations are generally directed against such as are alone. He dares not assault a company of believers in the same way that he does individuals. "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour: for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but wo to him that is alone when he falleth, for he hath not another to help him up." If dark and distressing experience be appointed for you, (and few Christians are altogether exempt from this,) remember that you are required to trust in the name of the Lord, and to stay your soul upon his sure word of promise. Only do this, and in due time the darkness will pass, and the shadows flee away. Whatever giant corruptions or mighty adversaries may oppose your heavenly course, only resist them in the name of Christ, and in the power of his might, and you will be able to testify: "By this I know that the Lord is on my side, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me." Copy the graces and avoid the sins and the infirmities of those whom you meet on your way. Imitate the integrity of an honest and good, that is,

a regenerate heart. Distinguish between the carnal fear of the wicked and the blessedness of the man that feareth alway. Give no encouragement to self-will; but mortify and oppose it, as an adversary that is utterly to be destroyed. Seek for your children the company of such as are known to be lovers of good men, or eminent for their piety and experience in the good ways of the Lord. It will save you from a thousand snares, if you have all your delight in true believers, and such as excel in virtue. You cannot avoid, in some measure, coming in contact with the follies and vanities that are everywhere to be seen. To be altogether removed from these, you must needs go out of the world. But seek only the shelter that is to be found in the company of the upright, and drink deeply into their spirit; and then all the pomps and vanities of the world will be unable to seduce you from the narrow path of life. When men have well drunk of the pure stream of spiritual pleasure, they have no relish for the unsatisfying draught of vain or sinful delight. We should try, as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Son of God, to get rid of our desponding fears and perplexing doubts. And not this only, we should labour to dispel the fears and doubts of other trembling Christians; endeavouring to make them acquainted with the liberty of the gospel, and showing them that for the very chiefest of sinners, and the meanest and the least of all believers, there is no condemnation, because they are in Christ Jesus. This, dear brethren, is the only effectual way to kill, as it were, the giant of Despair, and completely to demolish that dreadful castle in which he causes his prisoners to undergo such cruel sufferings. How

can there be darkness or doubt, if a living union has been formed between our souls and Christ, and his gracious Spirit be indeed communicated to us? God himself is the justifier of every true believer! Oh, seek to have this Saviour for your own Saviour, and then his gracious Spirit will dwell in you! The way to have Christ for your Saviour, is humbly to apply to him, and, as a poor sinner, to rest entirely upon him to save you. "Trust in him at all times."

III. But we must consider, in the last place, the good which our travellers found at the end of their journey. "The Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." And what he hath spoken, he will surely bring to pass. The happy party whose journey we have been reviewing, found goodness and blessings increasing upon them, as they approached to the end of their weary pilgrimage. The land which bordered upon the better region, as they approached to it, exhibited something of its beauty and fragrance and fruitfulness. They climbed the Delectable Mountains, and listened to the directions of the shepherds that were there abiding, keeping watch over their flocks. Now they joined the company of those eminent and excellent pilgrims, Valiant-for-truth and Standfast. The Enchanted Ground, though very trying, could not retard their onward steps. Neither the drowsiness of the air which they breathed, nor any of the attractive objects that were spread before them, could either lull them to sleep, or induce them to swerve from the right way. Some indeed they found sleeping even there. Thus they arrived at the Land of Beulah, the country that

joins the happy region for which they had set out at the beginning. The Land of Beulah they found unspeakably delightful. In that land there was constant sunshine. Birds were singing on every bough; and herbs and fruits and flowers were all vying together to display their varied sweets to the greatest advantage. And now there was only the river to be crossed, and then their journey would be ended, and their feet would stand in that very country, for the sake of which they had left their kindred and their own people, and cheerfully undergone all the toils and all the dangers of such a journey. A strange sensation came over them as soon as they got a sight of the river, and heard, from a distance, the murmur which it made. The solemn feeling which this produced was increased, by considering that they could not go over the stream together. They had travelled, many of them, in company thus far, but they were able to do so no farther. In this region they must part—only part for a little season. They were fully assured that on the other side they would all meet in company again, as well as join the society of such as had crossed over before them. As they could not cross the river in company, so neither was it lawful for them to do so until an express message was sent from the other side, commanding them to launch away. In due time such a message was sent to every one of them, from the King who reigns in those happy regions beyond the river. All the travellers had to pass over separately. Some of them were sent for almost as soon as they got a sight of the river, and some of them had to tarry for many days before any intimation was given that they were to cross over. And

as the time was different when these travellers made that last passage, so also was the manner of their crossing extremely different. Some of them got over with little difficulty, having found the water much more shallow and the passage much more easy than they ventured to expect. But with some of them it was far otherwise. When their turn came, the river had overflowed the usual banks, and their dangers and troubles were greatly increased. Some of them said little or nothing when they went into the water; some of them went over singing; and one of them actually stood still for some time in the middle of the stream, and spoke to those who stood on the water's edge in the most animating manner. But amid all this variety as to the time and manner of their crossing, this was observable in the whole company—not one of them was lost or drowned in that river. “It came to pass that they escaped all safe to land.” And they all received the most encouraging welcome on the opposite shore. The King himself was their friend, and admitted them to all the privileges and all the advantages which that happy region could afford. They found it a good land and a large; a land in which they could eat bread without scarceness, neither did they lack any thing in it. They joined the company of all their friends and kindred who had gone before them into that happy region. They beheld the King in his beauty, and the land which is very far off. They had no more toils, or sorrows, or hardships to be endured; and no more a dark and uninviting stream to cross. Violence was no more heard in their land, wasting nor destruction within their borders. The people also were all righteous. There was no night there. They knew no sorrow, they feared no change. It was a

new country in which they had arrived; they lived entirely under a new state of things. The former things were done away; and he that sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."

See here, my friends, a figure of the good which the Lord has spoken concerning his people. Here you have a glimpse of the place of which the Lord hath said, "I will give it you." Is it not a happy place? Is it not a good land, to which all the household of faith are indeed journeying? Oh that I could set before you in their true colours, those good things which God has prepared for them that love him! Oh that it may please God, by the effectual teaching of his Holy Spirit, to reveal them to your hearts! Then you will see them in such a light as to make you cheerfully relinquish all the pleasures of sin, all the delights of the world, and all the allurements of sight and sense, in order to be possessed of what alone can satisfy you and make you happy, both here and for ever. You cannot, my brethren, get a right view of the glories of heaven, and not be induced

"To scorn the trifles of a day
For joys which none can take away."

Hear, then, the good which the Lord hath spoken concerning his people. Is it not good to live the days of heaven upon earth? To climb, as it were, the mountains of delight, from which we can view the Canaan that we love, before we actually reach it? Is it not good to be associated with eminent and excellent saints, who stand fast in the faith, and who are only valiant for truth? Is it not good to be securely kept from all the enchanting and bewitching objects which strive to entice our hearts from God? Is it not good to have the earnest of

the purchased possession already in our hearts ; and, as we approach our journey's end, to know that we are betrothed unto the Lord in the bonds of an everlasting covenant, before we actually see his face in heaven ? Poor sinners that have humbly fled by true faith to Jesus Christ as their only Saviour, need not wait till they are actually in heaven, in order to be assured of their happiness :—

“The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets
Before we reach the blissful fields,
Or tread the golden streets !”

Is it not good to be safely conducted through the swelling of Jordan ?—I mean, to be comforted and supported, to be cheered and upheld, in our conflict with the last enemy—and then, as soon as we are delivered from the burden of the flesh, to be received into those mansions of peace and rest and joy and glory, which are prepared for them that depart hence in the Lord ? Oh, what must it be to dwell in that happy land, where the inhabitants no more say, “I am sick ;” where we shall see eye to eye the King in his beauty and his glory, and see the Lamb in the midst of the throne, still bearing the marks of being slain to redeem us to God with his blood ! What must it be, to drink of the water of life, and to bathe in those rivers of pleasure that flow through the Paradise of God for ever and ever ! What must it be to regain the society of all our many friends, who have gone before to that happy land—to see Abraham and the prophets, the apostles and martyrs and saints, and all whose good examples ever animated our faith and quickened our tardy footsteps in the heavenly road !

But why do I go on? We can never understand fully the good which God has prepared for his people, until we actually come to partake of it beyond the narrow limits of time. The true believer, when he actually falls down before the throne of God and the Lamb in glory—when all his trials and sorrows and wanderings are ended for ever—when he sees the glories and tastes the joys of heaven—he will be compelled to say to Him that sitteth on the throne, what the Queen of Sheba said to Solomon, when she had come from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear his wisdom and to see his glory: “It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the one-half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard. Happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom!”

Would you, my brethren, every one of you, join in this delightful acknowledgment in the heavenly land, and not be cast out into outer darkness? Begin now, then, to prepare to meet your God. You cannot be happy, you are not happy, in pursuing the pleasures of sin, or running the rounds of vanity, or standing aloof from the salvation of Christ. Oh! stop on your downward path. True believers find in Christ what they can never find anywhere else. And hark! they invite you to forsake the foolish and live; to join their ranks, and to share their happiness. This is the language which they address to you: “We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for

the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee."

HYMN.

COME, gracious Spirit, come,
And let thy power be felt;
Conduct us to our heavenly home,
And every spirit melt!

Thy mighty power alone,
The gracious work begins;
'Tis thine to change the heart of stone,
And make us feel our sins.

Awakened by thy grace,
This empty world we leave;
To Zion's mount direct our face,
And with the heart believe.

Preserved by Thee, our feet
Are suffered not to stray;
We face the dangers that we meet,
And onward urge our way.

And when our course is past,
Thy sanctifying grace
Alone can set us, at the last,
Before our Father's face!

Almighty Spirit, come,
Begin, continue, end,
Conduct us to our heavenly home,
From first to last our friend.

PRAYER.

LORD of all power and might, who art the author and giver of all good things; we humbly beseech thee, that by thy special grace preventing us, thou wouldst put into our minds good desires, and by thy continual help enable us to bring the same

to good effect. We fall low on our knees at thy footstool, to implore thy heavenly blessing upon the things which we have now heard. Blessed be thy holy name, thou hast spoken good concerning thy people. Thou hast prepared for them that love thee such good things as pass man's understanding. Remember us, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people. Oh ! visit us with thy salvation, that we may see the good of thy chosen, and rejoice with the gladness of thy nation, and glory with thine inheritance. We bless thee that thou hast remembered us in our low estate, and made known unto us the message of thy mercy. Mercifully grant that we, and all that appertain to us, may indeed become true pilgrims to the heavenly city. May we feel that this world is not our rest ; and may we arise and depart to set out on the way everlasting. May we love that which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise. May we determine to be followers of them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises. Give us grace to set our faces steadfastly to the heavenly city. May we choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. May we strive to enter in at the strait gate, be taught of thy Holy Spirit, and know nothing, as the ground of our hope or the source of our consolation, but Jesus Christ and him crucified. Support us in all dangers, and carry us through all the temptations to which we are exposed in our heavenly way. May we never turn aside, or draw back, or stand still, but hold on our way, and wax stronger and stronger, until the days of our mourning are ended and our warfare is accomplished. And when we come to end our mortal pilgrimage, oh, may we finish it with joy, and have an abundant entrance administered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our God and Saviour. Whatever trials or conflicts we may have by the way, grant that at the last we may be admitted to the number of those who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and are before thy throne, and see thy face, and serve thee day and night in the heavenly temple. Hear, O Lord, hear us, and fulfil all our petitions, through him whom thou hearest always, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

THE END.

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